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B R O A D W A Y  
T R A N S L A T I O N S

*“Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety.”*

TO  
A. E. HOUSMAN

“ To whom this book as honour due ?  
Surely Apollo's bays belong,  
In Latin and in English song,  
To you.”



Broadway Translations

MARTIAL  
THE TWELVE BOOKS OF  
EPIGRAMS

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## PREFACE

AT the time of his lamented death in 1920, John Arthur Pott was engaged on a complete translation, in verse and prose, of the Epigrams of Martial. The manuscript, about half completed, was left to his friend, Mr W. R. Smale of Radley College, and he, after reading it through, and in part revising it, has decided that, for the moment, the publication of the verse renderings only is advisable.

In memory of an accomplished poet and scholar I have endeavoured to finish his work to the best of my ability, and have added a short Introduction, my own versions being marked with an asterisk.

F. A. W.

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# INTRODUCTION

## I

### LIFE OF MARTIAL

MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS was born about the year A.D. 40, during the short reign of the Emperor Caius, in the Spanish town of Bilbilis. The name by which he is now commonly known was probably due to the accident of his birth occurring on the first of March: 'Marcus Valerius' forms part of the Roman dress which his countrymen soon after the time of Julius Caesar had so readily adopted. In the first century of our era Spain passed through one of those periods of intellectual activity which diversify the torpor wherein that strange land normally reposes, and Martial is but one of the group of brilliant Spaniards who are among the chief glories of the silver age of Latin literature. Two of the galaxy, the critic Quintilian, born at Calagurris A.D. 40, and the poet Lucan, born at Cordova A.D. 39, were his close contemporaries, and when, abandoning Bilbilis and the rushing Salo, he came to Italy to seek his fortune in 63, Seneca had reached the highest point of his long and magnificent career and seemed all-powerful at Rome. As a humble dependent of the Senecas, and through them of the Pisos, the most literary of all the great Roman families, Martial made his first entry into Roman life; and when in 65 B.C. on the discovery of the conspiracy Seneca and Piso were involved in a common ruin, the young stranger from Spain shared their downfall in his small degree, and was thrown upon his own resources. For many years existence for him must have been as hard a struggle as it was for Charles Dickens in his youth, and both writers owe much of their power to the forced realization of the most important fact in life, that a man must in some way or another get enough to eat. Being a Roman citizen Martial had a certain value as a client—if he could find a patron willing to employ him—but a

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client's pay, whether it took the form of rations or dole, was almost as scanty and precarious as that which a sandwich-man or a 'super' earns to-day. Moreover, competition in that particular branch of social service was excessively severe, for anyone then could be a client just as anyone now can be a clerk: there were only three requisites, a respectable appearance, a decent suit of clothes, and a dislike for hard manual labour. Probably it was his pen that saved Martial from starvation, and the couplets that now appear as Books Thirteen and Fourteen of the Epigrams, tags written to order, like our cracker mottoes, for the presents that were usually given at the Saturnalia, performed at least one useful function; they kept our poet alive. Moreover they gained for him some sort of reputation, and when the Colosseum was opened by the Emperor Titus in the year A.D. 80 a publisher was found ready to risk his first small book '*Liber Spectaculorum*', a set of thirty-two short poems describing the games, the contests, and all the other wonders of the great building.

'The Spectacles' mark the turning-point in Martial's fortunes. Though they are of small literary value they had a considerable success, and, attracting imperial notice, brought to Martial such privileges as accompanied the grant of 'father's right', *ius trium liberorum*. His social position was now assured and his poetical fame also quickly increased, so that he was able in A.D. 84 to publish and sell the collection of his gift verses which we now possess. By the beginning of 86 he was ready for a more ambitious flight and published the first two books of the Epigrams, mostly composed of poems referring to the reigns of Vespasian and Titus. After this date he must have been in fairly easy circumstances, for he was raised to equestrian rank, acquired a house on the Quirinal, and a small estate at Nomentum, had many rich friends, and always remained a bachelor. But old habit was strong and he is never tired of enlarging on his poverty and the discomforts of life at Rome. On one occasion, at least, he retired for a time to Forum Corneli in Gaul, and there published the third book of the Epigrams in A.D. 87. He soon, however, returned to the capital again and brought out Books IV, V and VI, in the next three successive years. Book VII announces the coming return of Domitian from his Sarmatian campaigns, and must therefore have appeared about the



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end of 92, while the next three books came out at yearly intervals. The death of Domitian decided Martial to leave Rome for good, and after sending the Emperor Nerva a selection from Books X and XI he finally returned to Bilbilis in 98. A Spanish lady, Marcella, gave him an estate, and there he ended his days, his last volume, Book XII, being mostly written in Spain, and published late in A.D. 101. The date of his death can be approximately fixed by a letter of Pliny the younger, written 104, which is so characteristic of that very superior person that it is worth quoting in full :

“I was very grieved,” Pliny writes to his friend, Cornelius Priscus, “to hear of Martial’s death. He was a talented fellow, of shrewd and vigorous understanding, his writings well seasoned with wit and sarcasm, and yet good-humoured withal. I did him the compliment of providing his travelling money when he left Rome : that I owed both to our friendship and to some trifles of verse which he wrote about me. It was an ancient custom to honour and reward those writers who sang the praises of individuals or states ; but in our times this, like many other excellent habits, has gone completely out of use. Since we have ceased to do praiseworthy deeds, we think that praise itself is silly. You ask what are the verses for which I thus repaid him. I would refer you to his book, but as a matter of fact I remember some of them : if you like these, you may look up the others later. He is addressing his Muse and tells her to seek my house on the Esquiline, and to knock respectfully.

‘ But do not with strong liquor flown  
Knock at a time that’s not your own.  
His days to study he must give  
Composing speeches, that shall live  
With Tully’s best, to please the ears  
And win a verdict from the Peers.  
More safe ’twill be to go a-calling  
If lamps are lit and night is falling.  
That is your hour, when reigns the rose,  
When brows are wet, and Bacchus flows ;  
For when the Wine God wildly rages  
Stern Catos well may read my pages.’

“As he wrote thus about me was I not right then to speed him on his way, and am I not right now to mourn for a true friend’s death? He gave me what he could ; he would have given more if he had been able. And yet

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

what greater gift can a man receive than glory and praise and eternity of fame? You may say that Martial's verses will not gain eternity: perhaps they will not; but he wrote them with the supposition that they would."

### II

#### THE EPIGRAMS

THE chief value of Martial's Epigrams, disregarding for the moment their literary excellence, lies in the picture they give us of Roman society towards the end of the first century A.D., that period in the world's history which, beyond all others, bears the closest resemblance to our own times. It is a picture drawn by a realist, and in its mingling of light and shade far more convincing than the lurid colours and unrelieved blackness with which Juvenal and Tacitus present us. Martial is a Sancho Panza who sees things as they are: the satirist and the historian have more likeness to the mad knight, and fired by their righteous indignation tilt as blindly against the established order of the Empire as Don Quixote did against his giant windmills. Their moral earnestness is certainly impressive, and as characters they are doubtless more deserving of our esteem than is the easy-going and pleasure-loving epigrammatist; but if we wish to gain a true idea of Rome and Roman life, about the year A.D. 90, it is to the pages of Martial, rather than to Juvenal or Tacitus, that we should turn. Martial has three great advantages over the other two writers: he is good-tempered, while they are soured and disappointed men: he is a Spaniard, to whom the Empire has brought nothing but benefits, while they are Romans who can never forget the time when the world was ruled in the interests of Rome: he is one of the middle class, the great discovery of the new system, while they belong to the official hierarchy which had for centuries enjoyed the doubtful privilege of government.

And so, writing from the outside without temper and without bias, Martial is able to give us a complete panorama of Roman society from top to bottom. At the very summit comes His Most Gracious Majesty, the Emperor Domitian, '*dominus et deus*', as he insisted on being called by the reluctant senate, whose shadowy



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powers he refused to recognize. 'His most gracious majesty'—the words make an appropriate inscription for the portrait of Domitian that Martial gives us. We see, not at all a cruel and detestable tyrant, 'calvus Nero', but rather a patriotic, popular, and—strangely enough—a rather Puritanical prince, whose benevolent activities at Rome run on much the same lines as those followed to-day by the London County Council. He curbs the enterprise of the pushing tradesmen who encroach upon the highway with their stalls; he settles scales of fees, and regulates theatre accommodation; he offers handsome prizes at the literary and musical competitions which take place in his Alban villa; he employs a young and deserving architect to build for him a palace which shall be worthy of the world's capital city; he keeps a strict watch over the morals of the community, passes laws to protect young children from vicious degradation, endeavours to preserve the sanctity of marriage and family life, and discourages all licentiousness in literature, being himself so strict in his regard for propriety that our poet has to be far more careful than is his wont when he is writing for the imperial ear. These are some of the impressions of Domitian's character that we get from a perusal of the Epigrams, and although Martial is commonly accused of shameless flattery and sycophantic adulation, it is well, for the sake of truth, that we have in him some corrective to the venom of Tacitus' pen. Domitian had his faults, but for the historian his unforgivable sin was that, being himself something of a realist, he refused to acquiesce any longer in the legal fiction that made the senate ostensibly a co-partner in empire.

Immediately below the Emperor comes the imperial entourage: Crispinus, the commander of the body-guard; Regulus, the great orator, Domitian's most trusted counsellor; the freedmen, Parthenius, imperial chamberlain, Sextus, librarian, and Entellus, confidential secretary; the architect Rabirius, the butler Euphemus, the cup-bearer Earinos, and the actors Paris and Latinus. On all of these, high and low alike, Martial lavishes his most ingenious flattery, receiving in return such small rewards as the gift of a toga from Parthenius, described with a wealth of hyperbole in Book VIII, xxviii.

Next we have the leading lights of Roman society,

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

political and literary, with nearly all of whom in their capacity of patrons Martial seems to have been acquainted, the word '*friend*' in their connection usually rhyming with "*send—me a present*" or "*lend—me some money*". Among the high officials, generals, administrators, and governors of provinces are Licinius Sura, Domitius Tullus, and his brother Lucanus, the Etrusci father and son, Macer, Avitus, Paulus, Vestinus, and Antonius Primus, the most brilliant commander of the Flavian armies, whose capture of Cremona is described in Tacitus' *Histories*. The literary aristocrats include the younger Pliny, Silius Italicus, author of the *Punica*, the poet Stella and his wife Ianthis, the poetess Sulpicia and her husband Calenus, Frontinus the great authority on aqueducts, and Polla, widow of Lucan. Of contemporary writers Quintilian and Juvenal receive complimentary verses; Statius alone is never mentioned.

Then follows a less distinguished gathering, men and women of Martial's own station in life, for whom he shows in many poems a very real and sincere affection. His dearest friend perhaps is his namesake, Julius Martialis, on whose suburban villa he writes one of his most charming pieces; but he has many other intimates, Quintus Ovidius, his neighbour at Nomentum, the centurion Pudens and his British wife Claudia, Canius Rufus of Gades, husband of the learned Theophila, his fellow poets, Castricus and Cerialis, Faustinus and Flaccus, his compatriots Decianus, Priscus, Licinianus, and Maternus. To all of these he writes with genuine warmth, and for many of them he obviously felt the same tender regard as inspires the three beautiful epigrams on the death of the little slave girl Erotion (V, xxxiv, xxxvii, X, lxi), poems which show that even if Martial was a bachelor and no great respecter of women, he was a true lover of children.

And then we are introduced to the more sordid side of life in the capital, to an anonymous world for whom Martial invents fictitious names—Zoilus, Caecilianus, Postumus, Galla, Lesbia, Gellia—a world consisting chiefly of needy clients and upstart parvenus, of old ladies of excessive temperament and young ladies of easy virtue. There is the *captator*, the adventurer who tries by flattery and small services to win the good graces of a childless millionaire, and to secure a legacy in his will: the *delator*, a pernicious rascal who makes a trade



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of spying on his neighbours and accusing them of some offence against the imperial regime: the *recitator*, less dangerous than the informer but even more annoying, the amateur poet who insists on boring his friends with recitals of his verses. Every aspect of Rome Martial presents to us. With him we pass through the crowded streets and the long muddy stairways up the hill-sides, along which the white-robed client in the early morning has to trudge his way in order to be present at his patron's levée. We see the law courts beset by a crowd of litigants and hear the applause and cheers that greet some brilliant effort of eloquence by a great advocate. We visit the baths, public and private, each with its own regular clientèle, and watch the masseurs anointing and rubbing down their customers, while sly thieves look for their opportunity to filch some bather's gown. We sit among the audience in the theatre and smile as Leitus or Oceanus, the two chief ushers, touch some upstart on the shoulder and eject him from the rows of seats reserved for senators and knights. We smell the odour of the circus mingled of the blood of slain animals, the scent of liquid saffron and cinnamon, and the press of the great crowd. And finally we hear all the gossip of the town: the shameful behaviour of the priests of Cybele, the unfortunate accident that befell an Etruscan at the sacrifice, how one boy was killed by a falling icicle, another by a snake lurking within a hollow statue, how a tame lion mauled the circus attendants, how a hare escaped unharmed from the arena; and so on and so on. There is hardly any incident however trivial which will not serve Martial as the subject for an epigram, and he always treats his theme with the lightest wit and the most dexterous skill. He is a realist, and one of the most extreme of that school: he shrinks from nothing, dull, coarse, and disgusting though it be; and consequently many of his pieces are extremely offensive to a delicate reader. But the blame for them, if blame must be allotted—in this volume they are mostly left in their original Latin—does not rest solely with Martial: part must be assigned to the realistic method, part to the Roman character, and part to life itself.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## III

### MARTIAL AS POET

IN the history of the Epigram Martial is indisputably the greatest name. As regards bulk of poems, variety of subject, general interest, and posthumous fame, he easily surpasses all his Greek rivals, while among his own countrymen there is no one who in this particular field can be even compared with him. He is certainly indebted in some degree—and handsomely acknowledges his debt—to Catullus and Ovid for his style; but if it is possible to improve upon the dainty lightness of the one and the glittering polish of the other, Martial accomplishes that miraculous feat. He is *the* epigrammatist, and it is largely owing to his predominance that the word 'epigram' in English bears a somewhat different meaning from that which it has in Greek. Originally an inscription, whether in verse or in prose, such as might be placed on a tomb, a statue, or a temple offering, it came to mean for the Greeks a short poem having, as Mr Mackail says, "the compression and conciseness of a real inscription, highly finished, evenly balanced, simple, lucid." To this definition most of the pieces in the Greek Anthology answer, but to the wit and point which form the chief essentials of a modern epigram they make little pretension. It is of Martial that the Oxford Dictionary is thinking when it says: "An epigram is a short poem ending in a witty and ingenious turn of thought to which the rest of the composition is intended to lead up."

Martial's reputation as satirist and wit has indeed rather obscured his more definitely poetical qualities. In the Epigrams he confines himself practically to three metres, the elegiac couplet, the hendecasyllabic, and the iambic scazon; and it is interesting to notice the connection that obviously exists between the choice of metre and the writer's thoughts. Though Martial lived most of his days in Rome, he was in a very genuine sense a lover of the country, of the simple life, and of his own native land. When he is treating of these three subjects and writing rather to please himself than his Roman audience, he is apt to escape from the confined limits of the epigram, and to employ the 'limping iambic' as his metre. The bizarre effect obtained by the unexpected

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spondee at the end of each line probably seemed to him exactly suitable; for in those days of strained rhetoric and formal antithesis it was an unusual novelty to have simple ideas and to express them in simple language. His model, of course, is the 'Sirmio' of Catullus, and in several pieces he, at least, equals his predecessor. There is the beautiful description (III, lviii) of Faustinus' farm, and of the suburban retreat of Julius Martialis (IV, lxiv), the outburst on the glories of Spain (IV, lv), and the ecstatic picture of the seaside at Formiae (X, xxx); best known of all perhaps the poem on the death of little Erotion (V, xxxvii), with whom compared, 'inamabilis sciurus et frequens phoenix.' These poems indeed are studded with gems of phrasing—'grandes proborum virgines colonorum', 'sub urbe possides, famem mundam', 'caelo perfruitur sereniore', 'viva sed quies ponti',—and they show that Martial had latent in him a vein of imagination not unlike that which Goldsmith worked when he wrote '*The Deserted Village*'.

While the best and longest of the iambic pieces treat of the picturesque, the most striking of the hendecasyllabics are concerned with personal emotions. Here again Martial follows Catullus in the 'Passer' poems, but for him the place of Lesbia is taken by male friends, above all by his dear Julius Martialis. To him the three most charming of the series are addressed, the invitation to holiday, with its reminder of the hours—'qui nobis pereunt et imputantur' (V, xx); the description of the happy life and all that it needs (X, xlvii); and the final poem of farewell written in sorrow from Spain—'nulli te facias nimis sodalem'.

It would be possible to collect from Martial a small anthology, in which each piece was of high poetical quality, and most of these pieces would be either in iambics or in hendecasyllabics. But this was not the sort of thing that really pleased Martial's public; what they wanted was humorous realism, and if the humour was somewhat gross, that was rather a recommendation than a fault. Consequently the large majority of the Epigrams are of the humorous type, and are written in the elegiac metre. Pieces more than twelve lines in length are comparatively rare, and a very large number are either in four lines or in two. Generally speaking, the shorter the epigram is, the stronger is the effect that it produces, and the device whereby the sting of the sarcasm is kept for the very last word is often used with wonderful effect.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Many of the two-line pieces in particular reach perfection within their limited sphere, and defy translation. To take one simple example, no better and no worse than a score of similar cases—(Bk. I, xxviii) :

hesterno fetere mero qui credit Acerram  
fallitur : in lucem semper Acerra bibit.

“ If you think it is yesterday’s wine smells so strong  
On Acerra, you’re wrong.  
Acerra this morning was still drinking deep,  
While you were asleep.”

An English translation may give the sense, but owing to the character of our language it cannot reproduce the finer points of sound and position of words on which Martial depends for his effect. In his epigram the vital points are the position of *hesterno* and *fallitur*, and the sound of the syllable—*er*—six times repeated in the two lines ; and these must almost inevitably disappear. Still the joke remains, and although slight, it is a good one, as chance once proved to me many years ago when I was a master at a certain public school on the south coast. I had been spending the night at the club and was returning home about 3 A.M. one bright summer morning, when, to my joy, I met my colleague, the Reverend Mr X., who was in the habit of rising with the sun to enjoy a walk over the downs. To ask him to take my form to-morrow and to be assured of his willingness was the work of a moment, and I went on to sleep the sleep of the just. About half-past nine, however, my landlady ushered the school porter into my bedroom—“ There’s no one with your lads, sir, and they’re making a bit of a noise ”. Jumping up in haste I ran across and reproached my friend with his breach of trust. “ My dear boy ”, said he, “ you asked me to take them *to-morrow* ”. I was forced to apologize, and since then I have always regarded this epigram with especial respect.

F. A. W.

THE EPIGRAMS OF MARTIAL





BOOK ONE

## BOOK ONE

### PREFACE

*I hope that in these little books of mine I have observed such due proportion that no man who is conscious of his own rectitude can complain about them, seeing that their sportive mood preserves, even towards the meanest individuals, that decent respect in which the authors of old were so lacking that they not only made wrongful use of real names, but even did this in the case of the great. For myself I would seek reputation at a lower price than that, and the last thing for which I desire to be commended is mere smartness.*

*May the malicious commentator abstain from meddling with the plain meaning of my jokes, and from writing my epigrams anew ; for he is dishonourable who misapplies ingenuity upon another's book. I would make no apology for immodest unreserve in word—that is, for the language of epigram—were I the first to use it, but this is the manner in which Catullus writes, and Marsus, Pedo, Gaetulicus, and every other author whose works are read all through ; yet if there be any man so ostentatiously prim, that one may not, even on a single page, speak plain Latin to him, he can be content to go no further than this preface—or rather no further than the title. Epigrams are written for those who are used to look on at the games of Flora ; therefore let no Cato come into our playhouse ; or if he come let him watch the show—and methinks I shall be within my rights if I close this preface with some verse—*

- \* *When you knew that the games of gay Flora were on  
You might from the theatre refrain :  
Or did you, stern Cato, come in with a frown  
Just to make a grim exit again ?*

# BOOK ONE

## I

### \* *PREFACE*

SEE, at your service, if you list,  
Martial the epigrammatist ;  
To whom, kind reader, here below,  
While he the joys of fame could know,  
Such meed of glory you have given  
As poets seldom reap in heaven.

## II

### *THE BOOK SPEAKS*

IF you would choose a book to be  
Your travelling comrade, I remind you  
To buy a handy one like me,  
And leave your heavy tomes behind you.

One that a single hand can hold  
Is best of all, and 'twere a pity  
Should you forget where such are sold  
And wander vaguely through the city.

Near Pallas' forum you shall see  
The shrine of Peace, and close behind them  
Secundus' shop—a freedman he  
Of Lucca's sage—there you shall find them.

## III

### *THE AUTHOR TO HIS BOOK*

POOR little book, but you're safer here ;  
Why seek Booksellers' Row—and Fame ?  
Mistress Rome is a blasée dame,  
All her children will gibe and jeer :  
Even her babies can sniff and sneer,  
Young and old, they are all the same,  
Poor little book, but you're safer here,  
Why seek Booksellers' Row—and Fame ?  
They whose applause may seem sincere  
Soon will toss you aside to shame.  
Think you my pen is too austere ?  
Go then fly ere it harm and maim,  
Poor little book—but you're safer here.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## IV

### *TO DOMITIAN*

CAESAR, if thou shouldst read what I have writ,  
Wear not the frown a world doth quake to see ;  
Even in triumphs may the soldiers' wit  
Flow unreprieved, aye tho' they jest at thee ;  
But let the smile thou grantest Thymelê,  
Or gay Latinus, deck thy brow serene ;  
From censure may my harmless mirth be free,  
My page is wanton but my life is clean.

## V

### *THE EMPEROR'S REPLY*

I SHOWED a pageant of the sea  
And in return you send to me  
Your wretched lines, you mocker ;  
Perhaps for this reward you look,  
That I should send both bard and book  
To Davy Jones' locker.

## VI

### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

SAFELY the Eagle bore young Ganymede  
In careful talons through the empty air ;  
So now the lions hear their Quarry plead,  
Safe in their mighty jaws doth sport the hare !  
A God of power supreme each marvel wrought—  
Is Jove's or Caesar's greater in thy thought ?

## VII

### *THE RIVALS*

ALTHOUGH Verona hears, I dare to say  
That Stella's lovely cushat soars above  
The pretty sparrow of Catullus' love.  
Aye, lesser is thy singer's vaunted lay  
As is the sparrow lesser than the dove.

## VIII

## TO DECIANUS

IN that you follow Cato's perfect way  
 And Thræsea's law, but choose to live your day,  
 Nor seek a naked blade your cares to end,  
 You live as I would have you live, my friend ;  
 Fame cheaply won doth mere self-slaughter give,  
 I choose for praise the worth that dares to live.

## IX

## TO COTTA

You long to be a pretty spark and win a hero's fame,  
 But 'pretty spark' and 'petty fop' are mostly much the  
 same.

## X

## LOVE'S CHARM

MARONILLA, Gemellus doth adore thee,  
 With instant prayers and vows doth oft implore thee,  
 And many a lover's gift he lays before thee ;  
 Since neither beauty, grace, nor charm attend thee  
 What makes him seek thee so, and thus commend thee ?  
*A churchyard cough that promises to end thee.*

## XI

## TO SEXTILIANUS

As a knight they allow you ten shillings a day,  
 But your wine bill alone is just double your pay,  
 So the servants would have a hard service, I think,  
 If they served you hot water to mix with your drink,  
 For to bring you enough's an impossible feat—  
 But you save them the trouble by taking it neat.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XII

### *TO REGULUS*

NEAR to Alcides' town, cool Tivoli,  
White Albula doth spread her misty mere,  
And close, at the fourth milestone, thou shalt see  
An holy grove and fields to Muses dear ;  
A farm with rugged porch for shade was here  
That nigh had wrought a dreadful deed—ah me  
So suddenly it fell !—And thou wert near,  
Scarce from beneath thy steeds had carried thee !  
I wot that even Fortune shrank aghast  
From crime so foul, lest hate should be her meed.  
Now is that ruin gain : for perils past  
Are things of price to all that give them heed,  
Dear Regulus, for had thy roof stood fast,  
It had not proved that there are Gods indeed.

## \* XIII

### *ARRIA AND PAETUS*

WHEN Arria, that model wife,  
Drew from her breast the blood-stained knife—  
' This does not hurt, dear lord,' she said,  
' 'Tis of your hurt I am afraid.'

## \* XIV

### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

THE other day we witnessed, Sire, a very funny thing,  
When lions wantoned merrily and sported in the ring,  
The while a hare leaped gaily forth from out their open jaws  
And gambolled with the fearsome beasts amid our loud  
applause.  
We wondered how the captured prey escaped the lions wild  
Till we were told that they were yours—and so of course were  
mild.

## XV

### *TO HIS FRIEND*

AH Julius mine, I count no friend more dear,  
So faithful love and friendship have we known ;  
And now your sixtieth consulate is near,  
How few the days that you can call your own ;  
Defer not joy, but claim the past alone ;

## BOOK ONE

Trust not a fortune that may ne'er appear,  
Too oft we find that wingèd joys are flown ;  
But care and linkèd toils are ever here.  
Nay, with both hands, we needs must grasp delight  
And hold her to our heart while yet we may :  
Yet even thus she oft doth mock our might  
And from the fond embrace doth glide away.  
True wisdom saith not ' Life shall soon be bright ' ;  
To-morrow is too late—Live thou to-day.

### XVI

#### *OLLA PODRIDA*

GOOD work you'll find, some poor, and much that's worse,  
It takes all sorts to make a book of verse.

### XVII

#### *DECLINED WITH THANKS*

You say, ' There's need of men to plead ' ;  
You bid me don the gown ;  
There's need, I vow, of men to plough—  
But must I turn a clown ?

### \* XVIII

#### *TO TUCCA*

WHY with this new cheap Vatican your old Falernian  
smother ?  
What wrong has the good liquor done, what benefit the other ?  
Your guests perhaps deserve to die : for them I do not care.  
But 'tis a shame that all must blame to slay a vintage rare.

### XIX

#### *THE LAST STRAW*

FOUR teeth, I think, were left to you  
Until, my ancient dame,  
A fit of coughing shot out two,  
A second did the same.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And now the third to come shall find  
There's nothing in the way,  
So, Aelia, calm your anxious mind  
And cough the livelong day.

### XX

#### *TO CAECILIANUS*

WHAT crazy trick is this you do ?  
Your guests look on amazed and rueful :  
You bade them come to dine with you,  
And now you gobble every truffle !  
What sort of dainty ought to fill  
That monstrous maw, you greedy sinner ?  
You'd eat if I could have my will  
The truffles served for Claudius' dinner.

### XXI

#### *MUCIUS AND PORSENA*

THE hand that sought a King but slew a slave  
Was thrust to perish in the altar flame,  
And Porsena his hardy foe forgave  
And bade him go, touched by a generous shame.  
While Mucius endured his hand to maim  
The monarch dared not to behold the deed ;  
And thus that hand has earned the greater fame,  
A truer blow had won a lesser meed.

### XXII

#### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

FEAR not the lion, little hare,  
Those dreadful fangs thou needst not flee,  
For these have never learned to tear  
A puny little beast like thee ;  
On mightier foes he spends his rage,  
From weakling necks doth he refrain,  
And shall thy blood his thirst assuage ?  
That petty draught would he disdain.

## BOOK ONE

As thou, for hounds a fitting prey,  
His hunger canst not satisfy,  
So Caesar's might doth turn away  
And pass the Dacian stripling by.

\* XXIII

### *BOON COMPANIONS*

If you would feast at Cotta's board,  
The baths your only chance afford  
To get an invitation.  
I never yet with him have dined.  
My naked charms do not, I find,  
Excite his admiration.

XXIV

### *TO DECIANUS*

To look on yonder fellow's brow austere  
And shaggy locks might fill the soul with fear,  
But hear him speak and you would surely say,  
'The Curius or Camillus of to-day.'  
Trust not to looks, they are a treacherous guide ;  
But yesterday one took him for a bride !

XXV

### *TO FAUSTINUS*

PUBLISH your works—too long have you forborne—  
Let not your polished work in darkness lie ;  
'Tis such as Cecrops' city should not scorn,  
Nor Rome's ripe scholars pass in silence by.  
Nay, doth it irk you that reward is nigh ?  
Why bar out fame who standeth at the gate ?  
Give birth to what must live, before you die,  
For honour paid to ashes comes too late.

XXVI

### *TO SEXTILIANUS*

ALL the seats to knights allotted  
Cannot vie with you, I think ;  
At this rate you'd be besotted  
E'en if water were your drink.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

You're a beggar most persistent,  
For you cadge from all at hand  
And you send to seats far distant  
Your importunate demand ;  
Yet the liquor that you favour  
In Abruzzi never grew,  
And no Tuscan hill could flavour  
Clusters sweet enough for you ;  
Nay, you quaff a vintage classic  
That Opimius knew of yore,  
And the blackened cask of Massic  
Yields for you its ripened store.  
Ten full cups I don't deny you,  
But if more you wish to drain,  
Then a pot-house should supply you  
With the dregs of Laletane.

### XXVII

#### 'TIS WISE TO FORGET'

I MAY have asked you here to dine,  
But that was late at night,  
And none of us had spared the wine  
If I remember right.  
You thought the invitation meant,  
Though wine obscured my wit !  
And—O most parlous precedent—  
You made a note of it !  
The maxim that in Greece was true  
Is true in Rome to-day—  
' I hate a fellow-topper who  
Remembers what I say.'

### XXVIII

#### ON ACERRA

HE reeks, you might think, of his yesterday's drink ;  
But knowing his customs and ways,  
You are wrong, I'll be sworn, for he drank till the morn,  
So the savour is truly to-day's.

## XXIX

*TO FIDENTINUS*

A RUMOUR says that you recite  
 As *yours* the verses that *I* write.  
 Friend, if you'll credit them to me  
 I'll send you all my poems free ;  
 But if as yours you'd have them known,  
 Buy them, and they'll become your own.

## XXX

*TO DIAULUS*

A SURGEON once, you now begin  
 As undertaker's man,  
 To earn a bedside practice in  
 The only way you can.

## XXXI

*THE VOW*

ENCOLPUS, the centurion's favoured slave,  
 Shall lay his locks, great Phoebus, at thy shrine ;  
 When Pudens hath the guerdon of the brave  
 In place and power, that offering shall be thine.  
 Ere down shall mar his cheek, claim thy reward,  
 While flowing curls the milk-white neck adorn ;  
 Long may thy boons endure to slave and lord ;  
 Let manhood wait, but let him soon be shorn.

\* XXXII <sup>1</sup>

*ON SABIDIUS*

I do not love you, Dr Fell.  
 The reason why I cannot tell.  
 But this at least I know full well.  
 I do not love you, Dr Fell.

<sup>1</sup> With due acknowledgments.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXIII

*ON GELLIA*

SHE weeps not for her sire if none be near,  
In company she calls up many a tear.  
True mourners would not have their sorrows known,  
For grief of heart will choose to weep alone.

XXXIV

*TO LESBIA*

You never guard or close the doors  
To hide your pranks from observation,  
And for those stolen joys of yours  
Your confidant is all the nation.  
Nay, those who see your wantonness  
Delight you more than those who share it,  
No pleasure pleases you unless  
To all the world you can declare it.  
From brazen ways pray, Lesbia, turn  
And let the demi-mondaines teach you,  
From Chionë or Ias learn  
A show of virtue, I beseech you.  
You think my censure harsh? Not so,  
For if you follow my direction  
I would not ask you to forgo  
Your lovers, but to shun detection.

XXXV

*TO CORNELIUS*

You say my verses are not fit—  
So loose and frivolous their wit—  
For pedagogues to read in school;  
Cornelius, you forget the rule  
That little verses such as these,  
Like wives and husbands, cannot please  
If they are prudish. Would you say  
'Write me a wedding-song, but pray  
Be grave as in a funeral dirge' ?  
At Flora's feast would any urge

## BOOK ONE

That every light o' love should be  
Veiled with a matron's modesty ?  
These merry songs, to win success,  
Need just a touch of wantonness ;  
A dullard would Priapus be  
If made a priest of Cybele.

### XXXVI

#### *THE BROTHERS*

LUCANUS, Tullus, if the Gods had given  
To you the fate of Castor and his brother,  
In loving emulation each had striven  
To give his life in ransom for the other,  
And he the first to seek dark Proserpine  
Had said, ' My brother, live thy days and mine.'

### \* XXXVII

#### *TO BASSUS*

YOUR chamber ware is made of gold,  
Your drinking-cup of glass is ;  
'Tis plain that you more precious hold  
The food that through you passes.

### XXXVIII

#### *TO FIDENTINUS*

THE verse is mine but friend, when you declaim it,  
It seems like yours, so grievously you maim it.

### XXXIX

#### *TO DECIANUS*

How few the friends like those in years of yore,  
That honest age, but if one such there be  
In Hellene culture steeped and Roman lore  
Ennobled by a true simplicity,  
A soul that Right and Honour hold in fee,  
Whose inmost thoughts and vows are void of shame,  
Whose giant mind upholds and makes him free,  
My life on this—that Decian is his name.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XL

## *THE POET'S CURSE*

MAY those who frown as they peruse this book,  
On all with envy, no one on them, look.

XLI

## *THE WIT*

CAECILIUS, you think your taste is pretty ;  
Believe me, any kennel in the city  
Could furnish rascals just as wise and witty.

Yours is the kind that every gutter hatches,  
Across the Tiber it is bred in batches  
And trades in broken glass and peddles matches.

If you would find your peers, the street supplies them,  
The sellers of boiled peas, the lout that buys them,  
The cheating quacks with snakes to advertize them.

The salt meat vendor's hireling is your fellow,  
To yours the street-musician's tones are mellow,  
The reeking sausage-seller thus does bellow.

Slave-dealing Spaniards, refuse of the nation,  
The debauchee whose drivelling iteration  
Is proof of babbling age and dissipation.

These are your equals. It does not beseem you  
To count yourself what no one else will deem you,  
No Tettius Caballus we esteem you.

Let not the meaning of his name misguide you.  
The taste and wit that nature has denied you  
No vulgar dullard's horse-play can provide you.

XLII

## *THE LOVING WIFE*

WHEN Porcia heard how Brutus fell  
And strove to join her lord,  
'Twas vain, for they who loved her well  
Withheld from her the sword.

## BOOK ONE

'Your witless care,' she cried, 'hath sought  
My purpose to deny ;  
I deemed my father's deed had taught  
That all who will may die,  
Though troublous knaves their wish withstand  
And every weapon hide.'  
Deep in her throat a flaming brand  
She thrust forthwith and died.

### XLIII

#### *TO MANCINUS*

You bade us dine with you, three score  
Invited guests, and nothing more  
You gave us than a wretched boar—  
Aye, that was all I vow.

No Autumn grapes of flavour rare,  
No apple honey-sweet was there,  
Nor any ripe and luscious pear,  
Hung late upon the bough.

No rosy peaches graced the board,  
Your baskets still their cheeses hoard,  
'No olive jar its bounty poured  
To cheer our drooping mind.

In lonely state that pigling lay,  
So small that 'twere an easy prey  
For any brat unarmed to slay ;  
Yet there was worse behind !

We never got a single bit,  
But only sat and looked at it,  
So in the Arena one might sit,  
And feast his eyes while starving.

You stingy host, for such a feat  
I will not wish you boar to eat,  
But only hope, when next you meet,  
The boar may do the carving.

### XLIV

#### *THE OLD THEME*

'HARES and Lions again,' so I hear you complain ;  
If they seem but monotonous fare  
And for vengeance you pine, you can ask me to dine  
And give me two courses of hare.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XLV

### *POET'S PADDING*

LEST all overlook so tiny a book  
And brevity lead to its loss,  
I will not refuse such padding to use  
As 'Τον δ'ἀπαρμειβόμενος.'

## \* XLVI

### *FESTINA LENTE*

WHEN you say—' Quick : let's get it over '—  
I feel myself a languid lover.  
It's only when you bid me wait  
That I dash from the starting-gate.  
If you are in such haste to go  
You'd better tell me to be slow.

## XLVII

### *TO DIAULUS*

Now leechcraft forsaking you try undertaking  
And furnish the funerals of men,  
So your trade is the same tho' you alter the name—  
For you always provided them then.

## \* XLVIII

### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

THE bull was not spared by that wide-open maw ;  
But the hare gambols lightly and frisks in his jaw,  
Running now all the swifter, escaped from the foe,  
And something of leonine courage doth show.  
She was never more safe in the loneliest fen,  
Never more sure of life in the depths of her den.  
If you wish, wanton hare, from the greyhound to fly,  
Then the jaws of the lion will refuge supply.

## XLIX

## TO LICINIANUS

THE Celtiberian tribesmen tell thy praise  
 And proudly doth our Spain thy fame record,  
 How glad thy lot on Bilbilis to gaze,  
 The city famed alike for steed and sword.

Caius the ancient with his locks of snow,  
 The shattered crags of Vadavevo's peak,  
 And soft Boterdus' valley shalt thou know,  
 Whose pleasant groves Pomona loves to seek.

How sweet in genial Congedus to swim,  
 Or breast the waters of the nymphs' calm pool,  
 In Salo's brook to brace each weary limb  
 Where steel is hardened by his waters cool.

Voberca's self—no further need'st thou stray—  
 Shall bring thee game, and thou shalt hunt at ease,  
 And cloudless summer's heat canst thou allay  
 By golden Tagus' bank beneath the trees.

Dercenna shall thy parching thirst assuage,  
 And Nutha colder than the frozen snow,  
 But ere the wrath of hoarse December rage  
 Seek the calm shores of sunny Tarraco.

Thy Laetania shall thy refuge be,  
 And there shalt thou the boar or hind ensnare,  
 The while thy verdurer tracks the stag for thee,  
 Thy sturdy steed may tire the cunning hare.

There unkempt urchins seek the genial glow  
 Thy forest-girdled hearthstone doth afford,  
 Where rustic guests a generous welcome know  
 And many a hungry hunter shares thy board.

The sandal, crescent-decked, the robe of state,  
 The cloak of purple dye thou shalt not need,  
 Nor fear the hoarse Liburnian at thy gate ;  
 No clients grumble there, no widows plead ;

No pale defendant breaks into thy sleep ;  
 Nay, if thou wilt, turn mornings into nights :  
 The world's applause let others seek and keep,  
 Yet feel some pity for those hapless wights.

And while friend Sura goes in quest of praise,  
 Seek true delight henceforth and pride forswear,  
 Justly the joys of life demand our days,  
 For fame already hath her ample share.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

L

## *TARATALLA*

SINCE Homer says, ' they sliced the other meat,  
You call your scullion ' Slice '—a gay conceit ;  
And may not I adopt a like device ?  
For ' T'other ' as a name is just as nice.

LI

## *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

WHY flee the lion in vainglorious flight ?  
The sturdiest foe alone provokes his might,  
And will he turn from lordly bulls to thee ;  
Or stoop to crush a neck he scarce can see ?  
Ah, puny hare, that hope must thou forgo,  
Thou shalt not fall to such a noble foe.

LII

## *FALSE CLAIMS*

To you will I commend my book ;  
That is if Fidentinus brook  
My claim to keep an owner's rights ;  
He always steals what he recites.  
Should he oppress it or enslave,  
Defend it and convict the knave ;  
And if he claim its lord to be,  
Say it was mine but now is free.  
Three times and four the truth proclaim  
And put the kidnapper to shame.

LIII

## *TO FIDENTINUS*

You stole my book—one page and one alone  
Is yours, indelibly 'tis signed and sealed  
With vilest imperfections all your own :  
Thus of the rest your theft doth stand revealed.

## BOOK ONE

So when the courtly gallants of the Town  
Are elbowed by a bumpkin smeared and patched,  
Their cloaks are sullied by the greasy clown ;  
Is vulgar clay with clearest crystal matched ?  
When to swan-haunted streams a crow is nigh  
The carrion bird hath yet a fouler taint,  
When thrills the grove to nightingales, the pie  
Mars with her evil shriek the Attic plaint.  
No surer proof, no advocate, I need  
Your page stands forth to prove your felon deed.

LIV

### *TO FUSCUS*

YOUR friends abound on every side,  
But is your heart all occupied ?  
For if one vacant place there be  
I pray you give that place to me.  
A love untried may yet be true,  
For all old friends have once been new.  
Make proof of mine, since, if 'tis fit,  
The years can only strengthen it.

\* LV

### *COUNTRY PLEASURES*

DEAR Fronto, famed alike in peace and war,  
If you would learn what my chief wishes are,  
Know that I crave some acres few to till,  
And live at ease as careless as I will.  
Why should I always trudge the stony street  
And go each morn some haughty lord to greet,  
When all the country's spoils are mine to get  
Caught in the meshes of a hunting-net ?  
When I with line could snare the leaping trout  
And from the hive press golden honey out,  
While Joan my humble board with eggs supplies  
Boiled on a fire whose logs she never buys ?  
May he not love this life who loves not me,  
And still in Rome a pale-faced client be !

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LVI

## *THE SEASON'S CRIME*

THE rain doth vex the vineyard still  
And drips from every vine.  
Vintner, whatever be your will,  
You cannot sell neat wine.

LVII

## *MODERATION*

You bid me say what kind of maid  
Can draw me or repel ?  
My friend, I hate a forward jade  
But loathe a prude as well.  
I love the mean : extremes are vain  
And never bring me joy ;  
Love long denied is grief and pain,  
While easy favours cloy.

\* LVIII

## *THE CONNOISSEUR*

' EIGHT hundred down '—the dealer said :  
I smiled—' No, not to-day.'  
But Phoebus straight the money paid  
And took the lad away.  
' You should not be so mean,'—you cry.  
' If Phoebus, why not you ?'  
I am not built like him ; or I  
Might be as generous too.

LIX

## *TO FLACCUS*

THE most luxurious baths on earth,  
Rich marbles to recline on,  
And then a wretched florin's worth  
Is all I got to dine on !  
Ah, give me Lupus' dingy den ;  
'Tis little consolation  
To bathe in luxury—and then  
To perish of starvation.

## BOOK ONE

\* LX

### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

THOUGH you may pass, Miss Hare, within his jaw,  
The lion thinks no flesh is in his maw.  
Where is your back, and where those shoulders round,  
Wherein the bullock feels the deep-struck wound?  
Why tease in empty sport the forest lord?  
He picks the beast that shall his meal afford.

LXI

### *THE CATALOGUE OF POETS*

WELL doth Verona love her poet-seer,  
To Virgil's sacred name doth Mantua thrill,  
And though she deems Stella and Livy dear  
Apona holds her Flaccus dearer still.  
To Nile that waters Egypt's rainless coast  
Apollodorus hath his lustre lent.  
Two Senecas are proud Cordova's boast  
With Lucan peerless and pre-eminent.  
Cadiz the gay delights in Canius' name  
Augusta doth with Decian's glory shine;  
So too our Bilbilis shall tell your fame  
One day, my friend, and haply whisper mine.

LXII

### *A CHANGE OF CLIMATE*

LAEVINA was a stricter prude  
Than Sabine dames of old,  
And e'en her husband's rigorous mood  
Was not a whit more cold.  
  
Alas, to bathe she loved to go  
And thus was she undone,  
For Tunbridge Wells enhanced the woe  
That Cheltenham had begun.  
  
'Twas there she felt the amorous flame,  
And fled with gallant gay:  
So 'twas Penelope that came,  
But Helen went away.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXIII

## *TO CELER*

You'd have me read my verse. Nay that ensures  
The consequence that you would make them yours.

LXIV

## *THE BOASTER*

YOU'RE rich and young, as all confess,  
And none denies your loveliness ;  
But when we hear your boastful tongue  
You're neither pretty, rich, nor young.

LXV

## *THE DOUBLE-ENTENDRE*

' FICUS,' I said, but when you heard  
You mocked it as a barbarous word  
And called my blunder gross.  
Your sort and mine, as now I see  
Do differ—fundamentally :  
So yours shall be, ' Ficos.'

LXVI

## *THE PLAGIARIST*

INSATIABLE thief, you're wrong to think  
That poets can be made at such a price ;  
Though paper's cheap and copying and ink,  
Believe me eighteen-pence will not suffice.  
Seek an unpublished work, verse yet unknown,  
Whose virgin page its owner guards within  
Close locked and sealed and scanned by him alone,  
Unsmear'd as yet by any studious chin.  
For books once known can hardly be suborned  
To change their lord ; find an unpolished scroll  
With boss and parchment cover unadorned—  
Some such I have and would not tell a soul—  
Remember, if for stolen fame you look,  
To buy the author's silence, not his book.

LXVII

*TO CERYLUS*

You often say my work is coarse. 'Tis true  
But then it must be so—it deals with you.

LXVIII

*THE ONLY GIRL*

'Tis Naevia if he smile or weep ;  
There's nothing he can do without her ;  
If silent for a while he keep,  
That very silence is about her.

'Tis Naevia still, do what he may  
Drink, eat, gesticulate, or mutter  
She only is his ' Yea ' and ' Nay '  
Which, save for her, he could not utter.

When writing to salute his Sire,  
His mind from her he could not sever,  
But ended with a lover's fire  
' My only life, my light for ever.'

With mocking glance did Naevia read  
And slyly smiled above the letter ;  
But, foolish Rufus, you've no need  
To rage—the're girls as good and better.

LXIX

*A MORTAL PAN*

TARENTUM worships Canius now,  
Of old she worshipped Pan ;  
And thus the merry God doth bow  
Before the merry man.

LXX

*GREETINGS*

Go, little book, to greet my friend for me,  
Do reverence in Proculus' bright halls ;  
And if thou ask the way, I'll tell it thee—  
Pass Castor's shrine and Vesta's ancient walls,  
That guard the Virgin Goddess' sacred home ;  
And thence a reverent temple thou shalt see  
Fair with the statues of the Lord of Rome.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Near is the vast Colossus decked with rays  
Wherewith the Rhodian marvel may not vie ;  
Yet hasten on and tarry not to gaze,  
And pass the shrine of gay Lyaeus by :  
Hard by the fane of Cybele, aglow  
With Corybants, in colours all ablaze  
Stands the fair house and lofty portico.

Go near thereto, 'tis never barred with pride,  
But Phoebus and the muse it holdeth dear ;  
To these its door is ever opened wide.  
But, if 'tis asked why Martial is not here,  
Say ' He doth weave thy praises into song  
And may not spare an hour to aught beside,  
For, had he come, his verse had suffered wrong.'

### LXXI

#### *THE TOAST*

A SEVEN-FOLD draught to toast Justina pour,  
For Laevia six, and five must Lycas claim,  
To Ida three are due, to Lyde four,  
One draught for every letter of a name ;  
That spell should draw them, but, if vain it be,  
I drink to sleep—he's sure to come to me.

### LXXII

#### *TO FIDENTINUS*

Do you design that verse of mine  
Should bring repute to you,  
Or did you deem by such a scheme  
To be a poet too ?

Well, I suppose, the pearly rows  
'Twixt Aegle's lips that glow,  
Though purchased bone, she calls her own,  
And thinks them truly so.

Lycoris, too, of mulberry hue  
Believes—delusion fond—  
The powder puff is quite enough  
To make a lovely blonde.

Must we regard you as a bard ?  
Why, then I will admit  
Your head has shocks of lovely locks  
Without a hair on it.

\* LXXIII

*TO CAECILIANUS*

WHEN you offered your wife to each passer-by free,  
 Not a soul ever wanted to try her.  
 You have learnt wisdom now : kept beneath lock and key  
 She has crowds of men waiting to buy her.

LXXIV

*TO PAULA*

You had some chance to disavow  
 What rumour said of him and you  
 Until you married him : but now  
 Will any hold the tale untrue ?

LXXV

*PRUDENCE*

WHEN Linus begged a loan, his friend,  
 A prudent soul, declined to lend  
 But gave him half, because he found  
 That saved ten shillings in the pound.

\* LXXVI

*THE POET'S WAGES*

DEAR Flaccus, you the best reward of all my anxious thought,  
 To manhood grown in that far town that once Antenor sought,  
 Have done with those Pierian strains the Muses love to sing ;  
 Of all the band none to your hand a shilling e'er will bring.  
 What from Apollo will you get ? Let Pallas be your friend,  
 A maid of sense without pretence, and lots of cash to lend.  
 What can the Bacchic ivy give ? But the Palladian tree  
 Still useful grows with bending boughs in grey-green harmony.  
 On Helicon you naught will find—a lyre perhaps or rose,  
 Or a bright gleam of babbling stream, and noise of vain  
 ' bravos.'

Why court the nymphs that in Permess or Cirrha have their  
 home ?

Richer by far and nearer are the markets of our Rome.  
 There you will hear the chink of coin : with poets only misses  
 Send through the air to our poor chair the sound of empty  
 kisses.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXXVII

### *ON CHARINUS*

His health is good yet he is always pale ;  
He drinks but little, 'tis of no avail,  
So wan his face no sun can darken it,  
And good digestion aids him not a whit,  
Not even rouge that pallid cheek can flush—  
And e'en his vices do not make him blush !

## LXXVIII

### *TO FESTUS*

THOUGH death had gripped his throat he knew not fear  
When the black venom crept into his cheek,  
But stayed awhile his sorrowing friends to cheer,  
Then tearless turned the nether world to seek ;  
Dark poison's numbing draught he put aside  
And would not brook slow famine's long delay ;  
Stainless he lived and as a Roman died,  
And since he dared to tread the nobler way,  
More glorious than Cato's was his end  
Who chose to die though Caesar was his friend.

## LXXIX

### *TO ATTALUS*

SOME busy task you still pursue, nor seem to care a jot  
Whether there's anything to do or whether there is not.  
As business man or counsellor your ardour never cools,  
You're busy driving bargains or as busy driving mules.  
'Tis unemployment that you dread : that evil circumvent,  
My busy friend, by dying ; for that job is permanent.

## LXXX

### *TO CANUS*

You begged a meal the day you died ;  
You got it as was due ;  
And then you perished mortified  
Because it wasn't two.

## BOOK ONE

LXXXI

*TO SOSIBIANUS*

YOUR mother was a slave ; but though you guess it  
Why call your father ' Master ' and confess it ?

LXXXII

*THE ESCAPE*

BEHOLD the crumbled mass that here  
Spreads o'er the ground its vast extent ;  
To crime unspeakable 'twas near,  
Yet is the ruin innocent.

Beneath the arch its master lay,  
The ponderous roof-tree overhead,  
And thence he scarce was borne away  
Ere fell the mass in ruin dread.

Whilst he was there, each mouldering wall,  
Each straining stone, the weight endured ;  
Ah Regulus, it dared not fall  
Until thy safety was assured.

Now as we shrink in fear to see  
How nigh the dreadful peril came,  
We know the Gods have care of thee  
And kept the ruin free from blame.

\* LXXXIII

*TO MANNEIA*

YOUR dog licks your mouth and you don't push him from it.  
But what says the proverb—' A dog and his vomit ' ?

LXXXIV

*ON QUIRINALIS*

CHILDREN he wants, but fears the marriage bond ;  
Yet his dislikes and fancies correspond ;  
For kindly handmaids set the matter right ;  
The fields and mansions of the worthy knight  
Are well supplied with slavelings—knightlings rather ;  
To each of whom he is a proper father.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXXV

## *THE TRUTH REVEALED*

POOR Marius ! the auctioneer,  
Who glibly spoke as he was bidden  
To keep his client's credit clear,  
Revealed the truth he should have hidden.

'Observe,' said he 'this favoured spot  
The land well tilled, the outlook pretty,  
In short an eligible lot  
Conveniently near the city.

'Pray, gentlemen, do not suppose  
The sale is forced—that's not suggested ;  
The owner not a penny owes,  
Nay, he has money well invested.

'Does some one ask what makes him sell ?  
Mere fancy that it is not healthy ;  
He's lost slaves, cattle, crops—and well,  
You know the whims that move the wealthy.'

I hear that no one cared to buy—  
Since none was loser by profession—  
And Marius still wonders why  
The land remains in his possession.

\* LXXXVI

## *NEAR NEIGHBOURS*

You think that I'm a happy man  
With Novius so near me,  
And when I lift my finger can  
Get him at once to cheer me.  
The truth is he's as far away  
As is my other friend  
Who rules Syene's land to-day  
Where Nile's blue waters end.  
I never meet him at a meal,  
Nor find his door ajar,  
There's not a soul in Rome, I feel,  
So near and yet so far.  
Well, either I or he must move  
Away from here, that's plain.  
When we're not neighbours, it may prove  
That we shall meet again.

## \* LXXXVII

*TO FESCENNIA*

THAT your breath may not smell of your yesterday's drink  
 A pastille will serve as protection, you think.  
 It may whiten your teeth ; but it does not avail  
 To cover the reek of the far-wafted gale  
 That comes from your nethermost caverns : 'tis blent  
 With the fumes of your liquor, that odorous scent.  
 Have done with such tricks then : they do not deceive us :  
 We know you're a toper : with that you must leave us.

## LXXXVIII

*ON A PAGE-BOY'S GRAVE*

DEAR Alcimus, reft from your loving lord,  
 Slain in your spring,  
 Here is your wayside grave with tender sward  
 For covering.  
 No tottering pile of marble here shall stand,  
 That, well I know,  
 Vain toil should raise for Time's relentless hand  
 To overthrow.  
 Nay, rather shading pine and shapely yew  
 Is planted here  
 And meadow flowers besprinkled with the dew  
 Of many a tear.  
 And take, beloved, for memorial  
 This song from me,  
 A monument that shall not waste nor fall  
 While time shall be.  
 I pray when Lachesis has spun mine hours  
 To their last thread,  
 Thus may I lie with simple trees and flowers  
 Above my head.

## LXXXIX

*TO CINNA*

CINNA, you whisper in one's ear  
 The things that all the world might hear,  
 You laugh, complain, dispute, and moan  
 As if 'twere for one ear alone ;



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Your silence—aye your clamour—wear  
A whispering and furtive air ;  
'Tis thus with songs, opinions too ;  
Has this disease so mastered you  
That when all loyal subjects sing,  
You merely hum ' God save the King ' ?

### XC

QUOD numquam maribus iunctam te, Bassa, uidebam  
Quodque tibi moechum fabula nulla dabat,  
Omne sed officium circa te semper obibat  
Turba tui sexus, non adeunte uiro,  
Esse uidebaris, fateor, Lucretia nobis :  
At tu, pro facinus, Bassa, fututor eras.  
Inter se geminos audes committere cunnos  
Mentiturque uirum prodigiosa Venus.  
Commenta es dignum Thebano aenigmate monstrum,  
Hic, ubi uir non est, ut sit adulterium.

### XCI

#### TO LAELIUS

You blame my verse ; to publish you decline ;  
Show us your own or cease to carp at mine.

### XCII

SAEPE mihi queritur non siccis Cestos ocellis,  
Tangi se digito, Mamuriane, tuo.  
Non opus est digito : totum tibi Ceston habeto,  
Si dest nil aliud, Mamuriane, tibi.  
Sed si nec focus est nec nudi sponda grabati  
Nec curtus Chiones Antiopesue calix,  
Cerea si pendet lumbis et scripta lacerna  
Dimidiasque nates Gallica paeda tegit,  
Pascaris et nigrae solo nidore culinae  
Et bibis inmundam cum cane pronus aquam,  
Non culum, neque enim est culus, qui non cacat olim,  
Sed fodiam digito qui superest oculum :  
Nec me zelotypum nec dixeris esse malignum.  
Denique pedica, Mamuriane, satur.

## XCIII

## COMRADES

HERE sleeps Aquinus—to his friend at rest  
 Death doth restore him,  
 That friend who to the mansions of the blest  
 Had gone before him.  
 Each was a legion's captain ; in the fight  
 'Twas his to lead it ;  
 But each has won a record yet more bright—  
 Here may'st thou read it.  
*They lived in honour's hallowed bond, and died*  
*That bond unparted ;*  
*No common thought of envy could divide*  
*The loyal-hearted.*

## \* XCIV

## ON AN OLD ACTRESS

WHEN you had lovers by the score  
 You never knew your part.  
 But now that lovers are no more,  
 'Tis learnt by heart.

## XCV

## TO AELIUS

WHILE others plead, you bawl and shriek—  
 The purpose we discern ;  
 The bribes men give you not to speak  
 Are all the fees you earn.

## XCVI

## A SLIP OF THE TONGUE

MY halting verse, go bear for me,  
 Unless the task o'erburden thee,  
 A word for friend Maternus' ear,  
 (Speak softly lest the world should hear).

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Tell of a certain man we know  
Who loves sad clothes and makes a show  
Of Baetic wool and garments grey,  
But holds that red is far too gay ;  
While amethyst will never do  
For men—' 'Tis but a woman's hue,'—  
Though robes undyed may win his praise,  
Or neutral tones, or simple greys.  
But though with garish tints he quarrels,  
Yet what about his lurid morals ?  
' Who is the man ? ' you ask. Somehow  
The name has slipped from me, just now.

## XCVII

### *THE FRAUD*

You only speak amid a chattering crowd,  
Yet claim with eloquence to be endowed,  
A claim that anyone can make, no doubt.  
Hark, there's a lull—*Now, Naevolus, speak out.*

## XCVIII

### *GOUT IN THE HAND*

HE's gouty in the feet, you say,  
This litigant who will not pay  
His counsel's just demand.  
The crippling poison, I conclude  
From this close-fisted attitude,  
Has now attacked his hand.

## \* XCIX

### *THE MISER*

WHEN you had but one thousand you then did appear  
So profuse that we asked God to give  
You a fortune to spend ; and within half a year  
Four legacies raised it to five.

But you, as though nothing were left you at all,  
So miserly now have become  
That but once in a year your companions you call  
To a dinner with you at your home.

## BOOK ONE

We are seven good men, each an old trusty friend,  
But the choicest repast that you offer  
Costs you but a few shillings and on us you spend  
The most doubtful coins in your coffer.

What boon shall we beg for you, generous sir?  
You've got five, so we'll ask God for fifty.  
And if in reply He should fifty confer,  
You will soon starve to death, Master Thrifty.

C

### *TO AFRA*

'PAPA,' 'Mamma,' in childish wise,  
How prettily you call!  
Yet you appear to others' eyes  
The grandmamma of all.

CI

### *TO HIS DEAD SECRETARY*

THY hand has shared my labours many a time,  
Demetrius, and courts have known thy skill;  
Ah, for the youth that faded in its prime,  
The hand that ere thy twentieth year lay still!  
I saw thee parched by fever's fiery breath,  
And could not brook that thou shouldst die a slave;  
I gave thee freedom's right before thy death—  
Would that my boon had freed thee from the grave!  
'Patron' you sighed and owned the gift from me,  
Then fared to Lethe's waters, glad and free.

CII

### *VENUS AND MINERVA*

BY giving Venus such an ugly face  
Your artist thought to win Minerva's grace.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## CIII

### *TO SCAEVOLA*

' WOULD heaven I were a millionaire,' you cried,  
Ere yet for knighthood you were qualified ;  
' Well would I lodge and sumptuously fare.'  
Then gaily laughed the Gods and heard your prayer.  
Yet is your raiment shabbier than before,  
Your shoes more patched and clouted than of yore,  
Ten wretched olives serve you for a feast,  
And out of these you save the half at least,  
Two meals from every dish you try to squeeze,  
And drink Veientan to its muddy lees,  
Two pence a day is all that you expend,  
One on cold pulse, one on your lady friend.  
Live decently henceforth, you cheating knave,  
Or else return to heaven the wealth it gave.

## CIV

### *THE HARE AND THE LIONS*

THE spotted pard, although the yoke be slight,  
Doth bow his neck thereto ; the tiger's might,  
For all his rage, is by a rod controlled,  
And the wild ass doth champ a curb of gold ;  
The Libyan bear is guided by a bit,  
And monster bisons to the rein submit ;  
A purple halter guides a mighty boar  
Vast as the brute in Calydon of yore ;  
Obedient to a swarthy master's will  
Leviathan displays a dancer's skill !  
Who would not deem a miracle was here ?  
Yet doth a marvel greater still appear.  
See how the lordly lions condescend  
On swift but timid hares their might to spend ;  
They catch, set free, and gambol with the prey  
That safe within their gaping maw doth play.  
Freely the quarry passes to and fro  
Through fangs that seem to dread the puny foe ;  
In sooth 'tis generous shame that doth restrain  
The might that late a lordly bull hath slain.  
Could human art have taught them pity ? Nay,  
'Tis Caesar's law of mercy these obey.

## CV

*OLD WINE*

THOUGH from Nomentan soil the vintage came,  
 Yet, as the years rolled on, by slow degrees  
 With age it changed its character and name ;  
 So old a cask bears any name it please.

## CVI

*THE SOBER LOVER*

You drown with water every cup  
 And, though your comrades press you,  
 The feeble draught you hardly sup !  
 What madness can possess you ?

Had Naevia sworn to crown your bliss  
 To-night, we had excused you ;  
 But since you groan and sigh, by this  
 We know she has refused you.

Then quaff a cup of fourfold size  
 And others let us pour you ;  
 To drown your sorrow must be wise,  
 If only sleep's before you.

## CVII

*TO LUCIUS JULIUS*

' YOUR trifling all is vain,  
 Sing me a nobler strain !'  
 Thus you implore me ;  
 Then grant the ease I crave,  
 Such as Maecenas gave  
 To bards before me.

So shall I weave a song  
 That through the ages long  
 May never perish ;  
 Nay, for the funeral flame  
 Cannot consume a fame  
 That all men cherish.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Dully the oxen toil  
On harsh and barren soil  
That yields no treasure.  
But fat and fruitful earth  
Turns weariness to mirth  
And toil to pleasure.

CVIII

*TO GALLUS*

FAIR is your stately house across the river,  
Long be it yours to flourish all your days.  
But now with years my feeble footsteps quiver,  
And far my garret by Agrippa's bays.

If in the early morn I come to greet you,  
A long and weary journey I must take,  
Fain would I travel further yet to meet you  
And count the toil as naught for friendship's sake.

One client less can give you little sorrow,  
'Tis much to me if I withhold your due;  
And so I send my book to say good-morrow,  
Ere at a later hour I come to you.

\* CIX

*ON A LITTLE DOG*

CATULLUS of a sparrow sung :  
But Issa's neater.  
A kiss is sweet from ringdove's tongue :  
But Issa's sweeter.  
She's nicer than the nicest girl,  
She's dearer than the dearest pearl ;  
No pet can beat her.

Whene'er she whines, you'd think that she  
Was talking sadly.  
Sometimes she cries, sometimes in glee  
She barks out gladly.  
And when she needs herself to ease,  
She lifts her paw and says—' Sir, please,  
I want to badly.'

If she is sleeping on your bed  
 You do not hear her ;  
 Nor will she soil the blanket spread,  
 You need not fear her.  
 So modest is she, we can't find  
 A suitor of the canine kind  
 To let come near her.

Lest death should take her from our eyes,  
 A picture giving  
 Her very self in shape and size  
 Portrays her striving.  
 Put dog and picture both together ;  
 You'll wonder which is paint, or whether  
 They both are living.

CX

*TO VELOX*

' SUCH lengthy epigrams,' you say, ' affright one.'  
 True, yours are shorter, for you never write one.

CXI

*TO REGULUS*

YOUR work is worthy of a wit  
 That earned a scholar's reputation,  
 The pious care you spend on it  
 Is equal to your inspiration,  
 And any man who marvels why  
 Incense and books to you are proffered,  
 Knows not a gift should typify  
 His qualities to whom 'tis offered.

CXII

*THE UNGRACIOUS PATRON*

I USED to say ' My Lord ' and ' Sir,'  
 Ere yet your worthlessness I knew ;  
 Now I have learned your character,  
 Plain ' Priscus ' is enough for you.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## CXIII

### *THE ENTERPRISING PUBLISHER*

READ, if you have good hours to waste  
And leisure moments cloy,  
The triflings of my callow taste  
While yet I was a boy.  
Though long I have forgotten it,  
The nonsense you can buy ;  
For Pollius will not permit  
Its feebleness to die.

## CXIV

### *TO FAUSTINUS*

FAENIUS doth own the meadows there  
Beside the watered plain,  
The little plot and garden fair  
That border your domain,  
And here his daughter's ashes lie  
Beneath a hallowed stone,  
Her name thereon : Ah, fain were he  
That there were writ his own.  
'Twere juster if an aged sire  
Had crossed the Stygian wave.  
Since fate denied him his desire,  
He lives to tend her grave.

## CXV

### *TO PROCILLUS*

THERE'S a maid who pines for me,  
(Doth your envy stir ?)  
Fairer than a swan is she,  
Naught can rival her.

Silver, lilies, privet, snow,  
All must yield their pride.  
(Now your jealous thoughts, I know,  
Tend to suicide.)

She by whom my heart is swayed  
 (Still your angry fright :)  
 Is a black but comely maid  
 Darker than the night.

Ant or cricket, pitch, or crow,  
 These are not so black ;  
 You'll consent to live, I know.  
 Put that halter back !

CXVI

*ANTULLA'S GRAVE*

By Faenius the grove and garden-plot  
 Are dedicated ;  
 In honour of the dead this hallowed spot  
 Is consecrated.  
 For here Antulla lies, too early slain,  
 Here sire and mother  
 Will share her grave, united once again  
 Each to the other.  
 Hast thou a hope this holy soil to own ?  
 Thou must forswear it ;  
 'Tis given for ever to the dead alone,  
 None else may share it.

CXVII

*TO LUPERCUS*

WHENE'ER we meet you always say  
 ' When may I send a servant, pray,  
 To fetch your book ? I'll read it through  
 And straightway send it back to you.'  
 Nay, trouble not your servant, friend,  
 To Pear-tree Court is far to send,  
 And one must climb an awkward stair  
 To reach my third-floor garret there.  
 No need is there so far to roam,  
 You'll find the book much nearer home.  
 You know the place where Argus died ?  
 You often pass it—close beside  
 Is Caesar's forum, and a stall  
 By columns marked, on which they scrawl  
 The names and works of bards, to tell  
 A passer-by what books they sell.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Here seek my works. You need not stop  
To tell the owner of the shop—  
By name Atrectus—what you seek ;  
He'll find you Martial ere you speak ;  
His top or second pigeon-hole  
Is sure to hold a handsome scroll,  
Well smoothed and decked with purple dye.  
It costs but half a crown to buy.  
' So much,' you say, ' for such a thing ? '  
*You're wise, 'tis not worth borrowing.*

\* CXVIII

### TO CAECILIANUS

IF five score epigrams are not enow,  
A reader must be boredom proof, I trow.

BOOK TWO





## BOOK TWO

### PREFACE

#### VALERIUS MARTIALIS to his friend DECIANUS GREETING

*'What is the good of a prologue,' you say. 'Is it not concession enough to you if I read the epigrams? And, besides, what do you mean to express in the said prologue that you could not express in the verses? I see why tragedies and comedies are allowed one, because they cannot speak for themselves, but epigrams need no herald and are content with their own power of speech—and a hurtful one it is too; they can do their prologising on any page they will. I beseech you, if you think fit to listen, not to do an absurd thing, nor dress a dancer in the long robe. Furthermore consider whether a wooden sword satisfies you as a weapon against a fighter armed with a net. I, for my part, take my place with those spectators who protest against any such unfair conditions.' I verily believe, Decianus, that you are right! Ah, if you only knew with what sort of prologue, and how long a one, you nearly had to deal! Be it then as you desire, and anyone who may chance to read this book shall owe it to you that he comes unwearied to page one.*



## BOOK TWO

### I

#### *PREFACE*

You might have borne three hundred pieces ? True.  
But, if you had, could any bear with you ?  
Why, little book, of brevity complain ?  
It saves a waste of paper : that's a gain ;  
The scribe needs but a single hour, and then  
To weightier books may turn his busy pen :  
A reader too more easily may brook  
The flaws and blunders of a tiny book ;  
For at a banquet he could read you through,  
Ere the mulled wine should cool, so short are you.  
Yet though by brevity success you court,  
Many will find you long, however short.

### \* II

#### *TO THE EMPEROR DOMITIAN*

CRETE gave the mighty name Metellus bore,  
Scipio a mightier gained on Afric shore,  
But yet more grand the name from conquered Rhine  
That, when a child, Germania made thine.  
Thy sire and brother won the Jewish crown :  
The wreath the Chatti send is all thine own.

### III

#### *TO SEXTUS*

You disappoint no creditor, you say ?  
True, no one ever thought that you would pay.

### \* IV

#### *TO AMMIANUS*

You fondle your mother and she fondles you :  
You're her ' brother ' and she is your ' sister.'  
Why those mischievous names, I should much like to know ?  
Why are you not her son when you've kissed her ?



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

If you think that such conduct is merely a jest,  
You're mistaken, my innocent 'brother.'  
When a mother as 'sister' would fain be addressed,  
She is neither the one nor the other.

### V

#### *TO DECIANUS*

To pass my days and nights with you,  
That were my lot if I might choose it.  
I pledge my life this word is true—  
Alas, that fortune should refuse it.  
I dwell two weary miles away,  
The homeward road my toil will double,  
And all the while I know I may  
Have but the journey for my trouble.  
For when I come, you are not there,  
At least I may not come anigh you ;  
Or I am told that public care  
Or private matters occupy you.  
I would not grudge two miles and more  
To greet my friend and sit beside him :  
'Tis weary work to travel four  
And, after all, to be denied him.

### VI

#### *TO SEVERUS*

'PUBLISH soon,' you used to say,  
And pretend  
That you could not bear delay,  
Eager friend ;  
Now your taste can hardly brook  
Just two pages of my book,  
Ere you yawn, and turn to look  
At the end.

Yet its verses are not new  
And unknown,  
All the duller ones to you  
I had shown ;  
Then how carefully you'd note them,  
In your pocket-book you wrote them,  
With intent, perhaps, to quote them  
As your own.

## BOOK TWO

Aye, at parties then you passed  
Them about ;  
On the interest you cast  
Little doubt.  
Now the book—no lengthy screed—  
Takes you half a week to read,  
Such enjoyment is indeed  
Long drawn out.

As a lazy traveller lags  
On his way ;  
Short the journey, yet he flags ;  
So you stay  
For an hour or two to bait,  
When you've barely passed the gate ;  
Yet 'twas you that would not wait  
Or delay !

### VII

#### *TO ATTICUS*

YOU'RE a moderate reciter, you've a pretty knack of pleading,  
You're a pretty story-writer, and your verse is pretty reading,  
You've a pretty style in dancing, and your voice is rather  
pretty,  
If your plays are not entrancing they are moderately witty,  
Then your satire's rather comic, and of letters you've a  
smattering,  
While on questions astronomic you've a pretty trick of  
chattering,  
Your music's commonplace with no unusual ability,  
At games you show some grace with no remarkable agility.  
Tho' you're moderate at all, you've mastered not a thing of  
them ;  
So a sciolist I call you—and the very prince and king of them.

### VIII

#### *TO THE READER*

GOOD reader, do not blame the bard  
For phrases too obscure or hard,  
Or if the grammar seem to halt ;  
Believe me that's the scrivener's fault.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

He knew your eagerness to read  
And sacrificed too much to speed.  
If me you blame instead of him,  
Your intellect must need be dim :  
You call me but a feeble poet ?  
I'm not so dull as not to know it ;  
My verse is poor, that I admit,  
But doubt if you can better it.

## IX

### *A COY MAIDEN*

SHE did not answer when I wrote,  
Refusal must be meant ;  
And yet I know she read the note—  
And silence gives consent.

## X

### *TO POSTUMUS*

You give me only half a kiss ;  
All thanks for that ; but pray  
Grant me a further boon ; 'tis this—  
Take half that half away.  
Yet higher should the favour be—  
Mere speech its worth profanes—  
If you would not inflict on me  
The quarter that remains.

## XI

### *TO RUFUS*

WITH clouded brow and weary gait,  
Unheeding though the hour be late,  
Doth Selius tramp the portico,  
His weary head bowed down with woe ;  
For grief that scarce can be suppressed  
He tears his hair and beats his breast.

## BOOK TWO

Deem not this sorrow doth portend  
The loss of brother or of friend ;  
His wife and sons—long life be theirs—  
Are prosperous ; in his affairs  
Bailiff and slaves are diligent,  
No tenant cheats him of his rent.  
' Then what can cause his grief,' you say—  
He has to dine at home to-day.

### \* XII

#### *TO POSTUMUS*

WHAT means it, I wonder, the odour of scent  
That's on your lips always, of cinnamon blent.  
It's suspicious this perfume whenever we meet :  
For men always scented don't really smell sweet.

### \* XIII

#### *TO SEXTUS*

BOTH the judge and the counsel say you're in their debt :  
You had best pay the one where most credit you'll get.

### XIV

#### *THE DINER-OUT*

THERE'S nothing Selius will not do or dare  
Rather than sup at home on meagre fare ;  
He haunts the running-ground and swears 'tis true  
That swift Achilles never ran like you,  
Paulinus ; failing him he next may go  
And take his chance at Jason's portico.  
That too is blank, so off to Isis' shrine—  
Some courtesan may take him home to dine.  
Failure once more ! Well, Pompey's porch may do,  
Or, should that fail, perhaps his avenue :  
He hurries next to Faustus' baths and then  
To Lupus' and to Gryllus' murky den.  
Still no success ! He bathes three times and more—  
Heaven sends no better fortune than before.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

So back he goes to spy if anyone  
Perchance is basking in the evening sun  
About Europa's porch and leafy bower—  
There's just a chance of one tho' late the hour.  
O amorous bull, pray pity Selius' plight,  
And make him dine with you in heaven to-night.

\* XV

### *TO HORMUS*

FROM your cup no one ever to drink you allow :  
But it really is kindness not pride that you show.

XVI

### *THE REMEDY*

Now Zoilus is ill, 'tis said ;  
But rumour's a deceiver.  
'Tis only that his scarlet bed  
Has given him scarlet fever.

He longed to make a fool's display  
(Good health alone prevented)  
Of downy cushions, hangings gay  
With Tyrian dyes and scented.

Not Aesculapius' art divine  
Is needed, I assure him ;  
If he would change his bed for mine  
I know that it would cure him.

XVII

### *THE LADY BARBER*

A LADY barber there doth dwell  
Just where Suburra's vale emerges  
To join the place where Argus fell,  
Where hang the lictors' bloody scourges.  
She sits among the cobblers' booths  
That take up half the street or block it ;  
No chin this barber ever smooths !  
What is it that she trims ?—Your pocket.

## BOOK TWO

### XVIII

#### *TWO OF A TRADE*

I COURT your dinners, truth to tell,  
'Tis mean as I'm aware ;  
But you're a parasite as well—  
And so we are a pair.

I come to call, and hear that you  
Have gone to call elsewhere ;  
You cringe before a patron too—  
And so we are a pair.

In town I join your escort's van  
And walk before you there ;  
But you escort some other man—  
And so we are a pair.

If serve I must, a master free  
Shall be the boon I crave ;  
Though ill that fate, 'tis worse to be  
The servant of a slave.

### XIX

#### *ON ZOILUS*

To think that I would fawn on you  
For dinner—such a dinner too  
As yours, ah, what a fate !  
He that could face your daintiest fare,  
Good Zoilus, had better share  
With Lazarus at the gate.

### \* XX

#### *THE PURCHASED MUSE*

PAUL reads as his own all the poems he buys.  
Well, all that he pays for is his, I surmise.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXI

### *TO POSTUMUS*

SOME you embrace. Some by the hand you shake ;  
Which would I choose ? Your hand, for mercy's sake.

## XXII

### *ON THE SAME*

OH, Phoebus and ye sisters nine,  
Why plague your bard ? What sin is mine ?  
What have I done amiss  
That Postumus, who distantly .  
Has heretofore saluted me,  
Now greets me with a kiss ?

## XXIII

### *ON THE SAME*

I WILL not give his name, although you press me,  
Let ' Postumus ' suffice you in my verse.  
He's well avenged when e'er he doth caress me ;  
Dare I provoke and make his vengeance worse ?

## XXIV

### *A DIALOGUE*

Candidus : If law your innocence abuse,  
I'll don the gown defendants use,  
And paler far my cheek shall be  
Than though the danger threatened me ;  
If driven from our Motherland  
With you I'll seek an alien strand,  
For shoals and rocks are naught to dare  
With you an exile's lot to share.  
Martial : Well, fate has granted wealth to you.  
Candidus : 'Twas meant for one and not for two.

Martial : But would you give the half of it ?  
 Candidus : That's much to ask you must admit.  
 Martial : Will you give anything to me ?  
 What ? You refuse ? It's plain to see  
 What ' sharing ' means ; your generous mood  
 Gives me the ill and keeps the good.

XXV

*TO GALLA*

You always promise happiness  
 And still your faith betray ;  
 If ' yes ' means ' no ' and ' no ' means ' yes,'  
 Say ' no ' to me I pray.

XXVI

*TO BITHYNICUS*

THOUGH you hope that her cough will soon carry her off,  
 For gasping and swooning is she,  
 Do not flatter yourself that you'll finger her pelf ;  
 For her faint is a feint with an ' e.'

XXVII

*CUPBOARD LOVE*

WHENE'ER you plead in court or read your verses,  
 Watch Selius fishing for an invitation.  
 With wild applause your words he intersperses,  
 ' Perfect,' ' Hear, hear,' ' 'Tis said to admiration,'  
 ' Bravo,' ' How grand the style ! ' ' How good the matter ! '—  
 Then you invite him, just to stop his chatter.

XXVIII

RIDETO multum qui te, Sextille, cinaedum  
 Dixerit et digitum porrigito medium.  
 Sed nec pedico es nec tu, Sextille, fututor,  
 Calda Vetustinae nec tibi bucca placet.  
 Ex istis nihil es fateor, Sextille : quid ergo es ?  
 Nescio, sed tu scis res superesse duas.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXIX

### *TO RUFUS*

ON a front bench to let the world admire  
He sits ; his jewelled fingers flash and glow,  
Deeply his cloak has drunk the dyes of Tyre,  
His robe is whiter than the virgin snow.

His locks diffuse their perfume all around,  
White are his glittering arms without an hair,  
New sandals daily on his feet are bound,  
And softest hide is all that he can bear.

The crescent on his scarlet boot is seen,  
His patch-bespangled brow bears many a star ;  
Dost know the creature ? Strip his forehead clean,  
The brands thereon tell what his titles are.

## XXX

### *TO GAIUS*

I CHANCED to ask a loan—a hundred merely ;  
E'en as a gift that should not task severely  
A wealthy friend, and so I asked him, knowing  
His pockets bulge with cash to overflowing.  
'Go to the Bar,' says he, 'get rich by pleading'—  
'Tis cash, not counsel, Gaius, that I'm needing.

## \* XXXI

### *THE PARAGON*

I KNOW Jenny well : she's a right proper lass :  
Not a girl in the town can her kisses surpass.

## XXXII

### *TO HIS PATRON*

You would not plead my cause with Balbus, lest  
You might offend and lose his interest :  
Against Licinus next I brought a suit ;  
You thought him far too great to prosecute :

Though Patrobas should trespass on my field,  
He's Nero's freedman, so you bid me yield :  
Or if Laronia keep the slaves I lend her,  
A rich old widow, you will not offend her.  
To serve a servant is a lot abhorred ;  
Let him be free who is my overlord.

## XXXIII

*TO PHILÆNIS*

You ask the reasons why I never do  
                                                          Kiss you ?  
Fair locks I love and you have none,  
                                                          That's one.  
Your face is of the beetroot's hue,  
                                                          That's two.  
Your one blear eye can hardly see,  
                                                          That's three.  
That act all nature might appal,  
                                                          That's all.

## \* XXXIV

*TO GALLA*

To buy a young minion you've spent all your gold,  
And let your three children go hungry and cold,  
While you force him on you his male vigour to prove,  
Who are long past the age for legitimate love.  
May you grow old together, and never another  
Embrace you but he, you unnatural mother.

## \* XXXV

*TO PHOEBUS*

As your legs are as curved as the moon's horns when new,  
Then your bath should be shaped like a drinking-horn too.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXVI

*TO PANNYCHUS*

I WOULD not have you curl your hair,  
Though tangled locks I can't endure ;  
Trim hands and skin should never bear  
The patent signs of manicure.

Ape not the beardless Eastern style,  
The culprit's sloven chin abhor !  
To pose as less than man is vile,  
'Tis barbarous to pose as more.

Though manhood's outward looks you wear  
In hirsute limb and bearded face,  
Your mind the while is plucked and bare,  
Of manly growth there's not a trace.

XXXVII

*TO CAECILIANUS*

SCARCE was the dinner served, ere you  
Had swept away our every dish ;  
Sow's udder, woodcock meant for two,  
Pig's ear, the choicest kinds of fish,  
The lamprey and the chicken's thigh,  
The pigeon stewed in sauces rare—  
And we, the hungry company,  
Had nothing left to do but stare !  
That bulging cloth, a dripping pack,  
Your slave bore off. Pretend or feel  
Some shame, and put our dinner back ;  
'Twas not for your to-morrow's meal.

XXXVIII

*TO LINUS*

You ask me how my farm can pay,  
Since little it will bear ;  
It pays me thus.—'Tis far away  
And you are never there.

## XXXIX

*FINE FEATHERS*

You took a woman off the street,  
 You gave her dresses rich and rare,  
 And yet the penitential sheet  
 She might with greater fitness wear.

## XL

*ON TONGILIUS*

AGUE they say ! I know what his complaint is,  
 A case of greed suppressed and thirst unsated :  
 Exhibit thrushes fat and other dainties ;  
 Red mullets too and pike are indicated ;  
 With fine old port his thirst should be abated,  
 And rare liqueurs stored in their slender bottles—  
 The faculty have all miscalculated  
 Hydropathy won't cure such fevered throttles.

## XLI

*TO MAXIMINA*

' LAUGH, maiden, laugh, if thou be wise,'—  
 Aye, that methinks was Ovid's rede ;  
 And yet not all doth he advise ;  
 But if he spake to all indeed  
 The poet's saw thou can'st not plead  
 Who long are past thy maidenhood,  
 And hast, for teeth to serve thy need,  
 Three stumps the hue of pitch or wood.

So if thou trust thy glass and me,  
 Put thoughts of laughter out of mind ;  
 The merry mood is not for thee,  
 Nor for the fops a blustering wind.  
 These shun the jostling of their kind,  
 The beldame with her powdered grace  
 Fears rain and is not glad to find  
 Bright sunshine on her painted face.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Wear looks austere, like Priam's Queen  
Or such as Hector's consort wore,  
And lest a smile should e'er be seen,  
No plays or feasts for evermore !  
All merriment must thou abhor  
With aught that might provoke to it ;  
The depths of grief must thou explore,  
Away with quips and roguish wit,

And rather haunt some house of woe  
Where mourning widows sigh and moan,  
If mother's tears or sister's flow  
Take thou their sorrows for thine own ;  
Be thine the Tragic muse alone,  
And thus a wiser maxim keep—  
Herein is crafty counsel shown—  
' If thou be wise, weep, lady, weep.'

\* XLII

### *TO ZOILUS*

THE bath-water's fouled when your buttocks you swill.  
Just put in your head ; 'twill be dirtier still.

\* XLIII

### *TO CANDIDUS*

THE proverb goes—' Let friends together profit.'  
And this is your interpretation of it.  
You sport a toga of Tarentine wool,  
Such tufts as from the Parman flocks they pull :  
Mine is so old you'd think a bull had torn it,  
Or that some scarecrow in the ring had worn it.  
Your Tyrian mantle's one of Cadmus own :  
My poor red cloak would scarce fetch half-a-crown.  
Your marble rounds on Indian ivory rest :  
My table's wood and is on drain-pipes pressed.  
For you huge mullets lie in golden dish :  
I from red earthen plates eat red crawfish.  
A troop of pages serve your every need :  
I help myself and have no Ganymede.  
' Profit ' for you : for your poor friend ' starvation.'  
That of the proverb's your interpretation.

## XLIV

*ON HUNKS*

IF Hunks should see me buy a coat,  
 A slave, or something worth a goat,  
 He shudders at my spendthrift whim,  
 And lest I beg a loan of him—  
 Though I have known him many a year—  
 He whispers so that I may hear:—  
 ' Four thousand Sesterces are due  
 To Phoebus, and Secundus too  
 Is pressing for his debt, 'tis seven ;  
 Philetus duns me for eleven :  
 I've not a farthing left to spend.'  
 How clever, my ingenious friend !  
 Were I to ask, refusing me  
 Would wound your generosity ;  
 It needs must be a harder task  
 Refusing what I do not ask.

## \* XLV

*TO GLYPTUS*

WHEN your duty you never could do to your wife,  
 Why offer yourself to the surgeon's sharp knife ?

## \* XLVI

*TO NAEVOLUS*

GAY as the flowers that Hybla shows in spring,  
 What time the bees are plundering on the wing,  
 So shine your presses with their mantles bright,  
 So gleams your chest with evening wrappers white,  
 Spoils of her flocks Apulia sent to you,  
 Enough to clothe a Roman tribe anew.  
 And yet—O shame—you look with careless eye  
 Upon your friend who passes shivering by  
 In threadbare coat, and do not think to give  
 A rag or two to keep him just alive.<sup>1</sup>  
 You would not feel the loss, you need not fear :  
 The moths alone would be the sufferers here.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XLVII

SUBDOLA famosae moneo fuge retia moechae,  
Leuior o conchis, Galle, Cytheriacis.  
Confidis natibus? Non est pedico maritus:  
Quae faciat duo sunt: irrumat aut futuit.

## XLVIII

### *THE POET'S NEEDS*

RUFUS, my simple tastes demand  
But modest things to smooth my path,  
Good wine and food, a barber and  
A bath,  
Chessmen, a board on which to play,  
A friend whose tastes and mine agree,  
Some books but leaving the choosing pray  
To me.

A young and well-grown serving lad,  
One maid if comely would not hurt,  
'Twould keep him busy if he had  
A flirt.  
Ah, friend, if you would give me these,  
Though in a small provincial home,  
I'd leave you all the luxuries  
Of Rome.

## \* XLIX

### *ATTRACTION*

'I WON'T marry Betty: she's too fond of men,'  
'Well, boys find her charming.' 'I'll marry her then.'

## L

QUOD fellas et aquam potas, nil, Lesbia, peccas.  
Qua tibi parte opus est, Lesbia, sumis aquam.

## LI

VNUS saepe tibi tota denarius arca  
 Cum sit et hic culo tritior, Hylle, tuo,  
 Non tamen hunc pistor, non auferet hunc tibi copo,  
 Sed si quis nimio pene superbus erit.  
 Infelix uenter spectat conuiuia culi  
 Et semper miser hic esurit, ille uorat.

## LII

*THREE IN ONE*

O BATHING man, I like your plan  
 Of counting, for I heard  
 Stout Spatale was charged as three,  
 And paid without a word.

## LIII

*TO MAXIMUS*

You would be free, but cannot ? that's a lie ;  
 'Tis easy, there's a simple plan to try.  
 Cease hunting for choice dinners everywhere,  
 And be content to drink vin ordinaire ;  
 Let gold inlay on Cinna's table shine,  
 Nor envy him ; and wear a coat like mine,  
 Waste not your substance on a courtesan ;  
 Lodge simply—'tis enough for any man.  
 Rule thus your mind to love but simple things  
 And you'll be freer than the Parthian Kings.

## \* LIV

*TO LINUS*

YOUR wife is not lacking in prudence or spite,  
 And that she has shown very plain ;  
 She has bidden an eunuch to watch you at night,  
 And thinks then you chaste will remain.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LV

## *TO SEXTUS*

I OFFERED love—you ask for awe ;  
Then I'll obey you and revere ;  
But don't forget the ancient saw  
That love will never dwell with fear.

\* LVI

## *TO GALLUS*

THOSE Libyan rogues accuse your wife of greed,  
And call her avaricious ; yes, indeed !  
But such a charge of rankest falsehood savours ;  
She rather is too generous with her favours.

LVII

## *THE DANDY*

JUST watch the fellow yonder stroll along !  
The costliest of clothes he loves to wear,  
And after him there comes a motley throng  
Of clients spruce and slaves with curly hair.  
His chair is gay and decked with curtains fair ;  
Say you the smartest dandy in the town ?  
Just now to buy a meal of plainest fare  
He pawned his only ring for half-a-crown.

LVIII

## *TO ZOILUS*

YOUR glossy clothes are superfine,  
You mock my old ones and abhor them ;  
At least, if threadbare, they're mine own,  
I didn't cheat the tailor for them.

## LIX

*THE BANQUETING-HALL*

You know my name, 'The little feasting hall' ?  
 Take roses, unguents, wine, and feast withal ;  
 But gaze with me at Caesar's dome which saith,  
 'A God was I—and died ! Forget not death.'

## \* LX

*TO HYLLUS*

My lad, it's a captain's good lady you're meeting,  
 Though you think if you're caught you'll get off with a beating.  
 He's a sword and he'll use it. 'Not legal'—you say.  
 Well, are they quite legal, your goings-on, pray ?

## LXI

CUM tibi uernarent dubia lanugine malae,  
 Lambebat medios improba lingua viros.  
 Postquam triste caput fastidia uisponum  
 Et miseri meruit taedia carnificis,  
 Uteris ore aliter nimiaque aerugine captus  
 Adlatras nomen quod tibi cumque datur.  
 Haereat inguinibus potius tam noxia lingua :  
 Nam cum fellaret, purior illa fuit.

## LXII

QUOD pectus, quod crura tibi, quod bracchia uellis,  
 Quod cincta est breuibus mentula tonsa pilis,  
 Hoc praestas, Labiene, tuae (quis nescit ?) amicae.  
 Cui praestas, culum quod, Labiene, pilas ?

## LXIII

*TO MILICHUS*

YOUR capital was always small,  
 Yet in the mart you gave  
 The thousand pounds that made your all  
 To buy a pretty slave.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

For love that price was high to pay  
E'en with a bulging purse.  
What's that? You're not in love you say—  
That makes the matter worse.

## LXIV

### *TO TAURUS*

ONCE at the Bar a longing look you cast,  
Anon 'twas rhetoric you thought inspiring,  
Now you are Nestor's age, and nearly past  
The time when others think about retiring.  
Begin, if rhetoric attracts you greatly,  
There's room for teachers—three have died just lately.

But should you think you lack the teacher's skill  
Or spirit, or are doubtful of succeeding,  
The courts have seethed with litigants, until  
The Marsyas himself might turn to pleading.  
Delay no more—we're growing tired of waiting—  
Or you are like to die, still hesitating.

## \* LXV

### *A GRIEVOUS LOSS*

' WHY does friend Johnson wear that gloomy look? '  
' Good cause,' you say, ' this very morn I took  
My wife's corpse to the grave.' ' Oh dear, oh dear,  
Your rich old wife, no more we'll see her here.  
And all her money now is yours to spend!  
I am indeed distressed, my worthy friend.'

## \* LXVI

### *TO LALAGE*

BECAUSE one curl had come unbound  
I hear you took your glass  
And called your maid, and to the ground  
Struck down the hapless lass.

## BOOK TWO

Cease, madam, pray, your hair to tire  
And fill your girls with terror.  
A razor is what you require  
To make you like your mirror.

Why should they your caprice obey,  
And to your fancies pander.  
Cut all those cruel locks away,  
Or touch a salamander.

\* LXVII

### TO POSTUMUS

WHENEVER I meet you, wherever I go,  
Ten times in one hour it is—‘ How do you do ? ’  
That ‘ How do you do ? ’ is your first word each day :  
It is plain that there is not much doing *your* way.

\* LXVIII

### TO OLUS

CALL it not pride, no longer I  
Can greet you as your thrall.  
I’ve won the cap of liberty,  
Although it cost mine all.

The man whose mean desires accord  
With all that masters crave  
Must cringe ; but he shall need no lord  
Who doth not need a slave.

LXIX

### TO CLASSICUS

ALL dinner invitations grieve you ?  
I’m sorry, sir, I can’t believe you.  
The famous epicures of Rome  
Were always pleased to dine from home.  
Why, if it bores you, should you go ?  
‘ I must,’ you say—Ah yes, we know  
All parasites that plea advance.  
But if you’re serious, now’s your chance :  
Friend Melior bids you dine to-day,  
So play the man and say him nay.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXX

NON uis in solio prius lauari  
Quemquam, Cotile. Causa quae, nisi haec est,  
Undis ne fouearis irrumatis ?  
Primus te licet abluas : necesse est  
Ante hic mentula quam caput lauetur.

## LXXI

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

ONE simple trick I note in you,  
That when I read a verse or two,  
You instantly begin to quote  
Catullus or some bard of note ;  
You mean to compliment my verse  
Perhaps by citing something worse,  
And though the contrast flatters me  
With its inferiority—  
Assuming this intent alone,  
'Twere better you should quote your own.

## \* LXXII

### *TO POSTUMUS*

A THING, I am told, happened yesterday night,  
Which I cannot approve, for I don't think it right.  
I'm informed you received such a tempest of knocks  
As the pantaloon gets when they play Box and Cox.  
And, what's more surprising, folk now are repeating  
'Twas Caecilius gave you that most unkind beating.  
You declare it's not true ; and I hope it as well,  
But the fellow has witnesses, so people tell.

## \* LXXIII

QUID faciat uolt scire Lyris : quod sobria : fellat.

\* LXXIV

*TO MATERNUS*

BEHIND and before him the clients pace slow  
 Attending Saufeius wherever he go ;  
 Such crowds as great Regulus brings from the court  
 When his client's acquitted and cuts his hair short.  
 Don't envy him, friend, for his train of dependants :  
 He borrows the money to pay their attendance.

\* LXXV

*IN THE CIRCUS*

A LION wont to cower beneath the whip,  
 Within whose jaws the trainer oft would slip  
 His hand unharmed, forgot its gentle ways  
 And showed the fury of its Libyan days.  
 Two boys belonging to the youthful band,  
 Who with their rakes smooth out the bloody sand,  
 The savage beast with fangs accursèd slew—  
 A greater crime the circus never knew.  
 Well might we cry—' Thou cruel thief, forbear.  
 Learn from our Roman wolf young lives to spare.'

\* LXXVI

*THE BITER BIT*

YOUR share of Marius' estate  
 Is just four pounds of battered plate.  
 You thought you'd cornered him : i' feg,  
 The boot is on the other leg.

LXXVII

*TO COSCONIUS*

TRY greasing wheels ; your taste reveals  
 You might be fit for that ;  
 Nay, truth to tell, 'twould suit you well  
 Because your wits are fat.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

For length you damn my epigram !  
Is Brutus' boy too small ?  
Your critic eyes perhaps despise  
Colossus as too tall ?

'Tis plain indeed you never read  
Marsus or Pedito sage ;  
One piece of each will often reach  
Beyond a single page.

A word remove and I will prove  
You do my poem wrong.  
Your couplets are too long by far—  
That is two lines too long.

LXXVIII

*TO CAECILIANUS*

YOUR fish won't keep in Summer-time ? Why not ?  
You can't have tried the baths that you call hot.

\* LXXIX

*TO NASICA*

You only asked me when you know  
I've asked another man to dine.  
And, as to-day I eat at home,  
Your invitation I decline.

\* LXXX

*SELF SLAIN*

WHILE Fannius the foeman fled,  
He madly pierced his side,  
And, lest he should be stricken dead,  
By his own hand he died.

\* LXXXI

*TO ZOILUS*

THOUGH in a gorgeous litter you may ride,  
It seems a pauper's bier when you're inside.

LXXXII

*TO PONTICUS*

WHY maim your slave by cutting out  
 The wretch's tongue, you brute,  
 When all the city talks about  
 Your crimes—though he is mute?

\* LXXXIII

*TO A JEALOUS HUSBAND*

You have robbed the young gallant of nostrils and ears,  
 And his face now of both is bereft.  
 But your vengeance remains incomplete it appears ;  
 He has still got another part left.

LXXXIV

MOLLIS erat facilisque uiris Poentius heros :  
 Uolnera sic Paridis dicitur ulta Venus.  
 Cur lingat cunnum Siculus Sertorius, hoc est :  
 Ab hoc occisus, Rufe, uidetur Eryx.

\* LXXXV

*A CHRISTMAS GIFT*

A WICKER flask with water iced inside  
 I send you as my gift this Christmas-tide.  
 You'll say perhaps it does not suit the season.  
 I want a summer suit : that is the reason.

LXXXVI

*TO CLASSICUS*

TRICK verses I would never plan—that is not my endeavour ;  
 My lines read backwards will not scan on any scheme whatever ;  
 You will not hear in verse of mine that feeble iteration  
 Whereby doth echo tag each line—a Greek abomination.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And though no Attis here shall spout smooth doggerel—you  
know it ?

'Tis sound with all the sense left out—am I so vile a poet ?

What if one bade a runner try contortions acrobatic ?

Ask Ladas this, and his reply methinks will be emphatic.

A silly task it is to make all difficulties double,

And foolery for fooling's sake is merely wasted trouble.

Such tricks let dull Palaemon do, his dullards entertaining,

And let me please the chosen few whose ear is worth the  
gaining.

\* LXXXVII

*TO SEXTUS*

You pretend for your kisses the girls are athirst,  
With your cheeks, like a diver's, just ready to burst.

\* LXXXVIII

*TO MAMERCUS*

You never recite, though you pose as a poet.  
Well, for that many thanks : we will gladly forgo it.

\* LXXXIX

*TO GAURUS*

I CAN pardon your habit of spending the night  
O'er the wine-cup ; for Cato in that did delight.  
And though with your verses the Muses you sully,  
I praise them ; for here you take pattern by Tully.  
When you vomit, you do as Mark Antony did ;  
And your greed by Apicius' shadow is hid.  
But when you indulge in your beastliest tricks,  
To find you a model I'm quite in a fix.

XC

*TO QUINTILIAN*

GUIDE of our wayward youth, whose golden tongue  
Is Rome's delight and boast, if I am wrong  
In making haste to live whilst poor and young,  
Forgive me ; others dally all too long ,

## BOOK TWO

These gather gold beyond their fathers' dreams,  
Ancestral busts their crowded halls might fill—  
To me my smoke-stained cot more pleasant seems,  
The earth's wild verdure and the running rill,  
A comely slave, a kind but simple wife,  
Nights of soft sleep and days unmarred of strife.

### XCI

#### *TO THE EMPEROR TITUS: A PETITION*

THOU glory of the world, our destinies,  
Our very faith in heaven, are stayed on thee.  
Should verse of mine find favour in thine eyes,  
Though often writ in haste, 'twill plead for me :  
Grant me a father's right ; though fate's decree  
Deny me fatherhood, that wrong redress ;  
If I have failed, may this my comfort be,  
And this the generous guerdon of success.

### XCII

#### *THE PETITION GRANTED*

Now with the rights of children three  
Caesar rewards my Muse and me,  
And mateless I'll remain.  
The boon that one alone can give  
By his divine prerogative  
Must not be made in vain.

### \* XCIII

#### *EPILOGUE. TO REGULUS*

' WHERE'S number ONE,' you say, ' if this book's TWO ? '  
My first is shy, so what am I to do ?  
But if in this the First you'd rather see,  
Take one away, and then it ONE will be.



BOOK THREE





I

*A PREFACE FROM GAUL*

THIS verse from Gaul is alien born,  
 Whatever be its worth,  
 And though the Roman garb adorn  
 The land that gave it birth.

Should you prefer the former book,  
 Yet I will not repine ;  
 Such preference I lightly brook  
 Since both of them are mine.

'Tis fit indeed that verse from Rome  
 Should be the best of all,  
 For e'en a house-slave born at home  
 Is better than a Gaul.

II

*THE WISE CHOICE*

MY little book, who shall thy champion be ?  
 Choose thee a patron soon, or, I foresee,  
 Snatched to a gloomy kitchen in a trice  
 Thou shalt wrap dripping fish or pungent spice ;  
 Thy clammy end the scullion shall decree ;  
 Sayst thou that to Faustinus thou wouldst flee ?  
 A happy choice—from ills shalt thou be free  
 Safe in his cedar-scented paradise,  
 My little book,  
 For bindings rich no niggard hand hath he,  
 But thou shalt dwell a tome of high degree  
 With bosses decked and many a gay device  
 In purple rare or scarlet dyes of price,  
 And critics shall not dare to mangle thee,  
 My little book.

III

*THE BATHER*

You veil your only charm, a pretty face,  
 And show a form that frights the bathing-place.  
 So, bidden by the water-nymphs, I pray,  
 Bathe fully dressed or cast your veil away.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## IV

### *AN APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE*

SEEK Rome, my book, and if she question thee  
Whence thou art come, say, 'Down Aemilian Road,'  
And if she ask the place of my abode  
Tell her Cornelius' Forum harbours me ;  
Confess that here I sojourn to be free  
From all her pomp and show, a weary load,  
And shall return when I forget to be  
A bard and sing a jingling lyric ode.

\* V

### *RECOMMENDATIONS*

LITTLE book, starting off to great Rome all alone,  
Would you have me commend you to many or one ?  
One's enough, pray believe me ; for he'll love you well,  
Dear Julius, of whom you have oft heard me tell.  
He lives by the Closed Colonnade, in the flat  
Which Daphnis some years ago used to live at.  
Though you're covered with dust when before her you stand  
His wife will give welcome with heart and with hand.  
If you see them together, or him first, or her,  
Just say—'twill suffice—' Marcus' greetings I bear.'  
A letter to strangers may strangers commend ;  
There's no need for long talk when you deal with a friend.

## VI

### *TO MARCELLINUS*

YOUR budding beard is shorn—the day  
Hath earned a double rite,  
For on this lucky date in May  
Your father saw the light.

On him hath Fortune never frowned—  
To-day his life began  
In happiness that now is crowned—  
His son becomes a man.

## BOOK THREE

### VII

#### *FREE DINNERS*

FAREWELL thou paltry dole, no more  
The parboiled bath-man at the door  
Hands out the toil-worn client's due.  
Poor starvelings, what a blow to you !

The bounty given in Nero's day  
Is gone ! I know that ye will say,  
' We'll fence no more ; our cry shall be  
" Fixed salaries and dinners free ! "'

### VIII

#### *IN THE COUNTRY OF THE BLIND*

'Tis one-eyed Thais sets his love aglow ;  
She is half-blind—*and he entirely so.*

### IX

#### *ON CINNA*

HE publishes lampoons on me, 'tis said ;  
How can he publish who is never read ?

### \* X

#### *THE SPENDTHRIFT*

YOUNG Scatterbag's father while he was alive  
To him one pound per diem did pay ;  
For he knew that a daily supply he must give,  
Or the spendthrift would fling all away.  
But now in his will he has put down his name  
As heir to the total estate—  
'Twere better for him, and would come to the same,  
To have been disinherited straight.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XI

### *TO QUINTUS*

DEAR Quintus, why resent my joke ?  
The one-eyed hag of whom I spoke  
Was Thais, and your lady's name  
Hermione—'tis not the same  
Or similar. Had I said Thais,  
Whereas your lady-love was Lais,  
You might complain of that ; beside  
You swear your love is not one-eyed !  
I called her lover ' Quintus '—true :  
Let's change to ' Sextus '—will that do ?

## XII

### *TO FABULLUS*

WHEN yesterday we came to dine,  
I own you gave us unguents fine,  
But there was not a thing to eat.  
Methinks a curious sort of treat.  
Perhaps you thought your guests had died  
And came there to be mummified !

## XIII

### *TO NAEVIA*

You would not carve the hare : it was not basted,  
So you declared : the mullet went untasted :  
The boar was more than high—our senses proved it—  
You called it ' over-fresh,' and then removed it.  
' Uneatable and raw,' you kept repeating ;  
In proof whereof you gave your cook a beating.  
A vain excuse ; we're safe beyond all question.  
A meal of nothing gives no indigestion.

## \* XIV

### *THE CANCELLED DOLE*

A STARVELING came from Spain of late ;  
But when he reached the city gate  
He heard about the dole in Rome,  
And turned again to starve at home.

## BOOK THREE

### XV

#### *THE TRUSTFUL SWAIN*

NONE takes such low security  
Though he is poor. My praise is just.  
For Cordus, tho' he cannot see,  
Accepts his lady-love on trust.

### XVI

#### *THE PARVENU*

YOU give a gladiators' show,  
Vain cobbler Kinglet, prince of leather,  
A fortune to your awl you owe,  
The sword destroys it altogether.

You're drunk, no sober man would skin  
His pocket in this careless manner.  
If you go on as you begin  
You soon must be a worthless Tanner.

I hope your foolish whim is past ;  
Here's my advice, if you will take it ;  
Retrench—the chance may be your last,  
No prudent cobbler should forsake it.

### \* XVII

#### *TRANSFORMATION*

A TART passed at table was so very hot  
It burned people's hands as to each man it got ;  
But Sam was still hotter to eat it ; and so  
He puffed out his cheeks and upon it did blow.  
The tartlet was cooled, nor could any one hurt ;  
But nobody touched it ; 'twas turned into dirt.

### \* XVIII

#### *TO THE POET MAXIMUS*

You began by remarking your throat was quite sore.  
We accept your excuse : but pray read us no more.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## \* XIX

### *THE BRONZE BEAR*

WHERE beasts in effigy the plane-grove grace,  
Hard by the ' Hundred Columns ' has its place  
A bear in bronze. Young Hylas in its jaw  
Thrust his fair hand to try the gaping maw.  
But lo, a viper grim was lurking there,  
Alert and far more deadly than the bear.  
The boy knew nothing till he felt the sting.  
Shame that the bear was not a living thing !

## \* XX

### *THE MERRY SOUL*

TELL me, my Muse, what Canius does this morn.  
Does he record for ages yet unborn  
The deeds of Claudius, or is his theme  
The screeds that foolish scribblers Nero's deem ?  
Does he the jests of naughty Phaedrus try,  
Epic severe and wanton elegy,  
And don the buskin of, great Sophocles,  
Or in the ' Poet's Corner ' loll at ease  
Telling gay stories full of Attic grace,  
Or in the porch of Isis' temple pace,  
Or idly stroll along the portico,  
Where Jason and his men their pictures show ?  
Perchance some bathhouse sees him take a dipper,  
Titus or Tigellinus or Agrippa ;  
Or else he sits and walks quite free from care  
Amid the box-trees where Europa fair  
Enjoys the sun ; or in some snug retreat  
He and Lucanus and friend Tullus meet.  
It may be that near Baiae's steaming bay  
He idly sails the Lucrine all the day,  
Or drives with Pollio those four short miles—  
' Do you want to know what Canius does ? He smiles.'

## \* XXI

### *GOOD FOR EVIL*

THE slave he'd branded saved his proscribed lord,  
Or rather shamed him : that's the better word.

## BOOK THREE

\* XXII

### *TO APICIUS*

You had spent sixty thousand on gorging your fill,  
And there only remained a poor ten thousand still.  
That to you was starvation ; so into your cup  
You poured deadly poison and drank the lot up.  
You were always a gourmet, of that I am sure ;  
But by death you were proved the complete epicure.

\* XXIII

### *' TO BE CONSUMED ON THE PREMISES '*

To your servants behind you you hand every dish :  
We'll call it your footmen's repast, if you wish.

\* XXIV

### *A STRANGE ACCIDENT*

A HE-GOAT caught while gnawing down a vine  
Was dragged to die at Bacchus' holy shrine.  
A Tuscan priest prepared the rogue to slay  
And bade a rustic who had come that way  
With sickle sharp to geld the unclean beast,  
Lest the rank odour should offend the feast.  
Then leaning o'er the altar with his knife  
He pressed it down to rob it of its life.  
But as he leaned, a hernia came to view,  
And the dull rustic without more ado  
Cut off the titbit, thinking, I suppose,  
The gods were honoured by such meats as those.  
So he's a Gaul who, when the rite began,  
A Tuscan was, but now no more a man.

XXV

### *A FRIGID ORATOR*

No one can bear your bath, so hot it is ;  
But there's a cure ; I'll tell you what to do.  
Bring Sabineius there ; a speech of his  
Once froze the baths of Nero through and through.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXVI

### *TO CANDIDUS*

THE harvest of your vast estate  
And all the hoarded wealth you own,  
Your cup of gold and priceless plate  
Are all reserved for you alone.

Your Massic and Opimian rare  
For others are too exquisite,  
And no man is allowed to share  
The products of your learned wit.

These things are yours, I don't dispute  
So plain a fact : upon my life  
Your ownership is absolute  
In all you have—except your wife.

## XXVII

### *TO GALLUS*

You ask me not to dine although  
I've often entertained you ;  
If all your hosts were treated so  
I never had arraigned you ;

But you are mean to me alone,  
So neither can be blameless ;  
That I'm a fool I freely own  
And, Gallus, you are shameless.

## \* XXVIII

### *TO NESTOR*

You wonder why Marius' ear smells so vile ?  
You've been whispering to him, good sir, quite a while.

## XXIX

### *ON ZOILUS*

Now Zoilus, the knight, to Saturn brings  
Fetters and chains ; they were his former rings.

## BOOK THREE

XXX

### *TO GARGILIANUS*

No money doles now patrons give,  
You're fed but never feed ;  
Yet still you try in town to live,  
And somehow you succeed.

Your coat is passing vile, 'tis true ;  
You rent a dingy den ;  
For these and for your pleasures too  
You sponge on other men.

' My costs of living,' so you say,  
' Are reasonably small.'  
If reason be in question, pray,  
Why should you live at all ?

\* XXXI

### *TO RUFINUS*

You possess, I allow it, wide acres of land,  
And your houses in town spacious gardens command,  
Many debtors bow low to your full money-chests,  
And dishes of gold bear the meat at your feasts.  
But don't be too scornful, for Didymus of yore  
And to-day Philomelus possesses far more.

XXXII

### *TO MATRONIA*

'Tis not your age that makes me cold,  
That's no impediment ;  
But you are something more than old,  
You're dead to all intent.

To Hecuba or Niobe  
My heart perhaps had warmed,  
But not when their humanity  
Was utterly transformed.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXXIII

### 'GIVE ME FAIR AMARYLLIS'

I'd choose a maiden gently born ;  
But if it may not be,  
A slave-born maid I would not scorn  
Whose lord had set her free.

Or e'en a serving-wench at worst,  
If these my love rebuff ;  
Nay, I would choose the bond-maid first,  
If she were fair enough.

## XXXIV

### TO CHIONE

YOU'RE cold as snow—Ah, Chione,  
Your name and nature thus agree ;  
Yet is that name unfitting too—  
For how can snow be dark like you ?

## XXXV

### ON A BAS-RELIEF

THEY'RE Pheidias' fish, engraved by him,  
Add water—and behold they swim.

## \* XXXVI

### TO FABIANUS

THE duties you claim from a friend newly made  
You expect, Fabianus, by me should be paid.  
To come every morning my patron to greet,  
And follow your chair in the cold muddy street,  
To be with you still at the close of the day,  
When you bathe at Agrippa's, right out of my way,  
And I bathe with Titus. Is this my reward  
For thirty long years of attentive regard ?

## BOOK THREE

I've always been ready and zealous in office,  
But yet you esteem me no more than a novice.  
My toga—I bought it myself—has worn thin :  
Don't you think now my time of discharge might begin ?

### XXXVII

#### *A MEAN TRICK*

RICH friends, 'tis your fashion to get in a passion  
With humble dependants, or feign it.  
Though not very nice, 'tis a saving device,  
Economy bids you retain it.

### XXXVIII

#### *LIFE IN ROME*

Martial : What motive, Sextus, brings you up to town ?  
Some idle hope of fortune or renown ?  
Sextus : I'll be a pleader : all our courts shall know  
I am more eloquent than Cicero.  
Martial : So Civis thought and Atestinus too,  
—You know them—but their rent is overdue.  
Sextus : If that should fail, my verses might atone ;  
They're worthy Virgil's pen, as you will own.  
Martial : The man is mad ; our Virgils you may meet  
And threadbare Ovids, cowering in the street.  
Sextus : I'll find a patron—others have before—  
Martial : And all have starved excepting three or four.  
Sextus : I mean to live here—tell me how I can.  
Martial : By luck alone, if you're an honest man.

### XXXIX

#### *ONE EYE BETTER THAN NONE*

As fair as Ida's swan is he  
Lycoris dotes upon.  
Well can that one-eyed beldame see  
Tho' half her sight is gone !



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XL

## *TO TELESINUS*

JUST because from the wealth that your coffers contain  
You consented a thousand to lend,  
You think you've obliged me : but let me explain,  
It's the one who repays that's the friend.

\* XLI

## *ON AN EMBOSSED GOBLET*

SET on this bowl, by Mentor's hand portrayed,  
The lizard lives ; to touch we are afraid.

XLII

## *TO POLLA*

You daub your face and think I shall not see  
Your wrinkles. You deceive yourself, not me.  
A small defect is nothing when revealed ;  
But greater seems the blemish ill concealed.

XLIII

## *TO LAETINUS*

You seem a youth to look upon.  
You dyed your hair—and lo,  
The locks once whiter than a swan  
Are blacker than a crow.

Not everyone can you deceive  
And, though you hide the grey,  
Yet Proserpine will not believe  
But snatch the mask away.

## BOOK THREE

### XLIV

#### *TO LIGURINUS*

AT your approach the neighbours flee,  
What is the cause that makes them flout you,  
And that wherever you may be  
A desert seems to spread about you ?

A tigress of her whelps bereft  
May fill the bravest heart with terror ;  
Untouched the basking snake is left  
And handling scorpions is an error ;

But you provide a peril worse—  
'Tis this, you overact the poet ;  
When you persist in reading verse,  
Could any patience undergo it ?

For though I run or stand or sit  
With verse my ears are still blockaded ;  
Aye, at the baths I must submit,  
My privy chambers are invaded,

You stop me on my way to dine,  
Then wearied by your droning numbers  
My seat at table I resign—  
I fall asleep—you break my slumbers.

Observe the evil that you do.  
Though good, men hold you as pernicious ;  
And thus an upright bore like you  
Makes even virtue look suspicious.

### XLV

#### *TO THE SAME*

DID Phoebus flee Thyestes' feast ?  
No faithful record still endures.  
But I, his bard, must be released  
From yours.

You keep a splendid table—true,  
To tempt the jaded appetite,  
Yet is the feast in vain—for you  
Recite.

Away with fine and dainty fish,  
Away be all the mushrooms flung,  
You spoil my palate with a dish  
Of tongue.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLVI

## TO CANDIDUS

My attendance as client you claim without end.  
I don't come myself, but my freedman I send.  
'That's not the same thing'—Nay, it's more, I will swear it.  
I can scarcely keep up with your chair; he will bear it,  
He will thrust people back if you get in a crush;  
My elbows are weak and too well-bred to push.  
At your stories in court I find nothing to say;  
But he'll shout 'bravo' with a deafening bray.  
If a law-suit you have, he will bellow abuse;  
My shyness forbids me strong language to use.  
You will say—'You, my friend, have an easy task got'—  
Not so: I will do all my freedman can not.

\* XLVII

## 'FRESH FROM THE TOWN'

WHERE drips the Capene gate with drops of rain,  
Where Almo cleans the Mother's knife of stain,  
Where the Horatian field with crops is green,  
Where young Alcides' shrine is crowded seen;  
There Bassus in his travelling carriage rode,  
Bringing of country crops a mighty load;  
Great cabbages, and leeks of either kind,  
Coss lettuces and beets you there might find,  
Useful to sluggish stomachs, fat field-fares  
Strung on a hoop, and with them Gallic hares  
And sucking pigs; the very footmen bore  
Eggs wrapped in hay, as they ran on before.  
'Bassus was coming back to town?'—you say:  
No: in the country he was going to stay.

\* XLVIII

## A POOR INVESTMENT

FRIEND Olus sold his land, that he might get  
The cash to build a dainty maisonette.  
The bill came in; and now, as he confesses,  
That maisonette is all that he possesses.

## BOOK THREE

### XLIX

#### THE MEAN HOST

YOURSELF you drink a vintage rare  
While giving me *vin ordinaire*.  
To smell the heel-taps of your wine  
Is better far than drinking mine.

\* L

#### TO LIGURINUS

YOU never your friends, sir, to dinner invite  
Except when you have some bad verse to recite.  
We have scarcely sat down when on our weary ears  
Comes the sound of 'Book One,' ere the *hors-d'œuvre* appears.  
You read through Book Two while the *entrée* we wait ;  
Book Three makes dessert and the savoury late.  
Then comes Number Four and at last Number Five :  
Even dainties so frequent a surfeit would give.  
If you won't to the waste-paper merchant consign  
Your poems, in future alone you must dine.

\* LI

#### TO GALLA

WHENE'ER I praise your legs and arms,  
Your eyes and rosy cheeks admire,  
You whisper low—' My hidden charms  
A deeper wonder will inspire.'

And yet whenever I suggest  
A bath together, you say no.  
Perhaps you fear that when undressed  
Without my clothes *I* shall not do.

\* LII

#### TO TONGILIANUS

YOU purchased a house for two thousand or so ;  
A misfortune too frequent at Rome, as we know,  
Saw it burned to the ground in a night.  
A subscription was started, and ten thousand pound  
You received. Well, I hope that it will not be found  
It was you set the building alight.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LIII

*TO CHLOE*

You boast a pretty face and arms,  
So fair you think that none can flout them,  
A pretty foot and other charms,  
But, Chloe, I can do without them ;

'Twere empty toil to specify  
Each several grace—I wonder whether  
I've made it clear to you that I  
Could do without you altogether.

\* LIV

*TO GALLA*

You need not consider or make an ado :  
I can't pay your price : so of course you'll say no.

\* LV

*TO GELLIA*

WHEN we see you, we think of a perfumer's shop,  
Or a cinnamon-jar brimming over the top.  
Don't fancy such nonsense attracts men you meet :  
My dog, if I scent her, will smell just as sweet.

\* LVI

*A THIRSTY LAND*

AT Ravenna a cistern will vineyards outshine,  
For water is here far more precious than wine.

LVII

*WATER v. WINE*

MINE host at Ravenna's a rascally cheat ;  
I ordered mixed wine and he gave it me neat.

## BOOK THREE

\* LVIII

### *TO BASSUS*

THE house Faustinus owns near Baiæ's coasts  
No widowed elms, no close-clipped boxes boasts,  
No myrtle groves extending far and wide ;  
His is the true, the artless countryside.  
In every corner sacks of grain recline,  
And many a jar smells sweet of ancient wine ;  
When autumn's gone and winter days begin  
The rough-clad pruner brings the last grapes in ;  
Bulls fiercely roar, as in deep vales they stray,  
And steers as yet unhorned pine for the fray ;  
About the farmyard poultry wander free ;  
Shrill geese and jewelled peacocks you may see ;  
There guinea-fowl and speckled partridge stand,  
And pheasants from the impious Colchian's land,  
And birds that from their redness get their name,  
And haughty cocks, each with his Rhodian dame ;  
From the high cotes resounds a soft lament,  
Turtles and ringdoves with the pigeons blent.  
Fat piglets give the bailiff's wife no rest,  
And tender lambs await their mother's breast ;  
Young home-born slaves flock round the hearth each night,  
And by the household gods the logs burn bright.  
No pale-faced servants here as vintners toil,  
No wrestling-masters waste the precious oil ;  
For greedy thrush a crafty snare they set,  
Or trap young roe-deer in a hunting-net,  
Or catch the fish with line and quivering rod ;  
Nor do the town-slaves wait the tutor's nod  
To get to work, but labouring with good-will  
In merry mood the fruitful garden till,  
While long-haired boys the bailiff swift obey ;  
And even eunuchs find that work is play.

His country guests come not with empty hands :  
A round of cheese from Sassina's forest lands,  
Or yellow honey in the comb safe hid,  
Or drowsy dormice, or a bleating kid,  
Or gelded capon ; and each sturdy maid  
In baskets brings the eggs her hens have laid ;  
When work is done his neighbours come to dine,  
All share the meal nor do the slaves repine,  
Or grudge the guests their fill : he does not borrow  
From to-day's dish to serve a feast to-morrow.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

But you, my friend, in your suburban seat  
Win but starvation from your garden neat ;  
From your high towers you see but laurel leaves,  
Nor need your garden god have fear of thieves ;  
Your labourers are fed on corn from Rome,  
And you import to your gay country home  
Greens, apples, poultry, eggs, and wine, and cheese.  
Mansions in town, not farms, need things like these.

\* LIX

*' TIMES ARE CHANGED '*

AT Bononia a cobbler furnished a show,  
At Matina a bleacher : I'm wondering now  
At what sort of town we may possibly see  
An innkeeper give people circus-games free.

\* LX

*TO PONTICUS*

TO-DAY I dine with you at my own cost,  
So why not fare the same, both guest and host ?  
You swallow Lucrine oysters large and fat,  
I suck a whelk and cut my lips at that.  
You're served with mushrooms, I chew fungus still  
You have to do with turbot, I with brill.  
Plump yellow doves your appetite assuage,  
I have a magpie starved within its cage.  
I'm by your side and yet I'm far away.  
The dole has gone. Let's fare the same, I say.

LXI

*TO CINNA*

YOUR impudent demands to mask,  
You always say that what you ask  
Is—nothing—but, if that be true,  
What I refuse is nothing too.

## BOOK THREE

\* LXII

### *TO QUINTUS*

FOR a slave you will pay a cool thousand, or double ;  
For a cup forty pounds : to pay gives you no trouble.  
King Numa laid down the choice wine that you drink ;  
Your furniture cost you ten thousand, I think.  
For the price of your carriage a farm you might own ;  
Your hackney is worth a fine mansion in town.  
You imagine that taste just depends on your purse ;  
But the truth is, my friend, it is just the reverse.

LXIII

### *TO COTILUS*

YOU'RE quite a pretty spark I heard, for many folk maintain it ;  
What is the meaning of the word ? pray, Cotilus, explain it.  
'Observe,' you say, 'my curly hair—the style is just invented—  
With cinnamon and balsams rare I'm elegantly scented,  
I hum the last Egyptian song, the newest dance from Cadiz,  
And loll in boudoirs all day long to gossip with the ladies :  
My pretty nothings soft and low I whisper with devotion,  
My lily hands and gestures show the poetry of motion.  
To read and answer little notes make up my daily labours,  
In horror of their vulgar coats I always shun my neighbours,  
And at the races I can tell the sires of all the winners.'  
That all, my friend ? You can't go on ? Then I don't want  
to see one,  
And save in Little Peddington would any choose to be one ?

\* LXIV

### *THE CLUB BORE*

THE sirens, who on sailors brought  
The jocund death themselves had sought,  
Their spite Ulysses knew to foil :  
He heard, yet robbed them of their spoil.  
Great is his fame ; but greater glory  
'Twere to escape old John when he begins a story.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXV

## *TO DIADUMENUS*

FRUIT-LADEN breath on maiden's lips,  
Effluence that from safran drips,  
Odour of vines in early May,  
Fragrance that comes from new-mown hay.  
Earth steaming wet with summer showers,  
Nard which from rosy chaplets pours,  
Myrtle and amber, eastern scents,  
Fires glowing pale with frankincense—  
As sweet as all of these your kiss—  
So grudge me not my fill of bliss.

\* LXVI

## *ON THE MURDER OF CICERO*

THE triumvir's sword that Tully robbed of life  
Was full as guilty as the Egyptian knife,  
For he excelled all pleaders at the bar  
As much as laurelled Pompey shone in war ;  
And Antony but poor excuse can bring :  
He served himself ; Pothinus served his king.

\* LXVII

## *THE LAZY BOATMEN*

MY lads, you naught of rowing know ;  
You're lazy, I'm afraid.  
More sluggish than the shallow tide  
Where dips your languid blade.

The sun has climbed to heaven's height,  
His steeds all panting seem  
And now the hour of midday rest  
Unyokes the weary team.

You pull along the placid waves ;  
But with unstraightened back.  
The boat is safe ; you take your ease ;  
Your tars not jack but slack.

## BOOK THREE

### LXVIII

#### A WARNING

MATRON, this book for you is writ,  
Thus far : you ask about the rest ?  
'Tis meant for men like me—its wit  
Perhaps is somewhat scantily dressed.  
  
'Tis stripped quite bare to run its race  
And cannot wear a modest guise—  
The wrestling-ground and bathing-place  
Are sights unmeant for matron's eyes.  
  
The rose's scent, the flowing bowl,  
Have wrought on my Terpsichore,  
Henceforward she doth scorn control  
And recks not that her speech is free.  
  
As when Priapus' figure stands  
O'er garden-plots his watch to keep,  
Prudes veil their face with modest hands  
And yet between their fingers peep.  
  
So you had laid aside the book  
As dull and wearisome to you ;  
But now will take another look  
Thereon—and read the volume through.

### \* LXIX

#### TO COSCONIUS

IN your poems there's nothing the modest to vex,  
Not a line in the lot that makes mention of sex.  
For myself, I confess it, my books are too free,  
And I praise and I wonder at your purity.  
Let ladies of pleasure and naughty young men  
And amorous elders delight in my pen :  
But the chaste decent verses, which to us you sing,  
For vestals and children will be quite the thing.

### \* LXX

#### TO SCAEVINUS

THE wife you divorced, who has married her lover,  
You're trying again on the sly to recover.  
From the fact she's another's fresh charm she derives,  
And the danger a zest to adultery gives.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXXI

MENTULA cum doleat puero, tibi, Naeuole, culus,  
Non sum diuinus, sed scio quid facias.

## LXXII

VIS futui nec uis mecum, Saufeia, lauari.  
Nescio quod magnum suspicor esse nefas.  
Aut tibi pannosae dependent pectore mammae  
Aut sulcos uteri prodere nuda times  
Aut infinito lacerum patet inguen hiatu  
Aut aliquid cunni prominet ore tui.  
Sed nihil est horum, credo, pulcherrima nuda es.  
Si uerum est, uitium peius habes : fatua es.

## LXXIII

DORMIS cum pueris mutuniatis,  
Et non stat tibi, Galle, quod stat illis.  
Quid uis me, rogo, Phoebe, suspicari ?  
Mollem credere te uirum uolebam,  
Sed rumor negat esse te cinaedum.

## \* LXXIV

### TO GARGILIANUS

Do you shrink from a barber that you smooth your cheek  
With salve, and with plaster a hair-clearance seek ?  
Well, how will you manage to pare your long nails ?  
With them neither resin nor gypsum avails.  
Nay, cease thus your wretched old noddle to shame :  
Let girls, if they wish it, indulge in that game.

## LXXV

STARE, Luperce, tibi iam pridem mentula desit,  
Luctaris demens tu tamen arrigere.  
Sed nihil erucac faciunt bulbique salaces  
Inproba nec prosunt iam satureia tibi.  
Coepisti puras opibus corrumpere buccas :  
Sic quoque non uiuit sollicitata Venus.  
Mirari satis hoc quisquam uel credere possit,  
Quod non stat, magno stare, Luperce, tibi ?

## BOOK THREE

\* LXXVI

*TO BASSUS*

A MAID you scorn, a crone for mistress have,  
And court old dames with one foot in the grave.  
Yours must indeed an amorous frenzy be.  
Hecuba you love, you hate Andromache.

\* LXXVII

*SUSPICIOUS TASTES*

You do not like fieldfares, you do not like mullet ;  
Neither hare nor roast boar ever passes your gullet.  
Sweet cakes and hot rolls to you both are unpleasant ;  
You never have partridge, you never have pheasant.  
But capers and onions you eat soaked in brine ;  
Falernian you shun, but you drink resined wine.  
Dry sprats you think tasty and pale salted tunny,  
And meat from a ham that's decidedly funny.  
There's something suspicious, that's quite understood,  
When a man prefers filth and avoids wholesome food.

LXXVIII

MINXISTI currente semel, Pauline, carina.  
Meiere uis iterum ? iam Palinurus eris.

\* LXXIX

*' PERSEVERANTIA VINCIT '*

JACK keeps starting new games ere the old ones are over :  
I think he must be a most incomplete lover.

\* LXXX

*TO APICIUS*

You do not find fault and you do not backbite ;  
But there's something about you that is not quite right.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXXXI

QUID cum femineo tibi, Baetice Galle, barathro ?  
Haec debet medios lambere lingua uiros.  
Abscisa est quare Samia tibi mentula testa,  
Si tibi tam gratus, Baetice, cunnus erat ?  
Castrandum caput est : nam sis licet inguine Gallus,  
Sacra tamen Cybeles decipis : ore uir es.

## \* LXXXII

### *SORDID SPLENDOUR*

WHOE'ER can endure with Zoilus to dine  
At a supper with drabs by the walls might recline,  
Or drink, even sober, from Leda's cracked jar,  
For it's cleaner than he is and sweeter by far.  
He sprawls on a couch which he fills all alone,  
And with elbows thrust out takes three places for one,  
Propped on purple silk cushions in saffron green coat  
With a minion beside him to tickle his throat  
Or hand him a toothpick, and lying below  
A woman to fan him and cool his hot brow.  
A boy with a myrtle branch keeps off the flies,  
And a dexterous masseuse her nimble art plies  
Rubbing all his limbs over with wide-stretched-out hand,  
While a eunuch stands waiting his finger's command,  
And holding his drunken lord's person with care  
The voided stream guides to the full earthenware.

The great man himself to the crowd at his feet,  
Where the lap-dogs are gnawing their goose-liver meat,  
Turns and throws bits of ham for his wrestlers to seize  
And with turtle-doves' rumps tries his minion to please.  
We quaff poor new wine from Liguria's hills  
Quickly mellowed by smoke ; for his jesters he fills  
A cup of bright crystal or veined alabaster  
With Opimian nectar to drink to their master.  
Though himself he is drenched in the costliest scent  
He feels it no shame in gold shells to present  
Us with grease that is used for their hair by poor whores,  
And when he's quite drunk, he just lies back and snores ;  
While we still at table must even refrain  
From toasting each other, and silent remain.  
That's the treatment we get at Sir Malchio's feast ;  
And we can't pay him back, he is such a foul beast.

## BOOK THREE

\* LXXXIII

### *TO CORDUS*

You advise me to write shorter poems, my friend.  
‘ Let Chione show you the trick.’  
With her the beginning is also the end.  
For myself, I cannot be as quick.

LXXXIV

QUID narrat tua moecha ? non puellam  
Dixi, Gongylion. quid ergo ? linguam.

\* LXXXV

### *TO A JEALOUS HUSBAND*

WHAT ailed you to cut off the young gallant's nose,  
And leave all unscathed the prime source of your woes.

LXXXVI

### *TO A MATRON*

THESE pages were not meant for you  
That was distinctly understood,  
Yet you are reading them—I knew  
You would.

Dear prude, through many plays you've sat.  
Read on, nor fear my coarsest verse ;  
The scenes you often chuckle at  
Are worse.

\* LXXXVII

### *TO CHIONE*

THEY tell me, dear lady, you've always lived chaste  
And your limbs by a lover have ne'er been embraced.  
Yet for them at the baths a close cover's supplied :  
It's your face, in my judgment, you rather should hide.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXXVIII

SUNT gemini fratres, diuersa sed inguina lingunt.  
Dicite, dissimiles sunt magis an similes ?

\* LXXXIX

*TO PHOEBUS*

BY the look of your face I should say—'Change your diet.'  
Some lettuce or mallow will purge you : just try it.

\* XC

*INCONSTANCY*

SHE will and she will not. I really can't say  
'Twixt her will-not and will what she means—Yea or Nay.

\* XCI

*THE PRIESTS OF CYBELE*

A SOLDIER was coming back home to Ravenna  
With Achillas, a pretty young runaway, when a  
Band of effeminate priests came along  
And the soldier joined up with the castrated throng.  
The priests asked the boy where in bed the pair lay ;  
For they thought that on him a foul trick they would play.  
But he saw their intention and cunningly lied—  
'My place,' he declared, 'is the outermost side.'  
After supper the priests, when the two were asleep,  
Took a knife and in silence towards them did creep,  
And proceeded the outermost partner to geld  
While the boy his safe place on the inner side held.  
We have seen how a stag saved the maiden of old :  
But here for a stag we a phallus behold.

XCII

Ut patiar moechum rogat uxor, Galle, sed unum.  
Huic ego non oculos eruo, Galle, duos ?

## BOOK THREE

\* XCIII

### *TO VETUSTILLA*

OF consuls you have seen quite fifteen score,  
Of hairs you've three, of teeth you've only four,  
Grasshopper's breast, ant's legs and colour pale,  
Forehead more wrinkled than a woman's veil.  
Your breasts hang loose as spiders' webs, the while  
Your mouth gapes open like a crocodile.  
Ravenna's frogs and gnats may be no joke  
But they are more agreeable than your croak.  
An owl in daylight can see just as well,  
A he-goat has a more attractive smell.  
Your back should to a skinny duck belong,  
Your front a Cynic even finds too strong.  
The bathman has to put his lantern out  
Ere you can join the drabs who roam about  
The tombs at night in search of some stray lover.  
For you in August winter's still not over,  
And even fever cannot now suffice  
To warm your limbs and melt your ancient ice.  
But yet you yearn for marriage, I am told,  
After two hundred trials and are bold  
Enough to think a man will feel desire  
For your cold ashes and your burnt-out fire.  
Bid such a one the solid rock to hoe ;  
For how could you your wifely duties do,  
When you as ' grandmother ' are now addressed ?  
Nay, if you want your shaking limbs caressed,  
Go, get a bedstead from the realms beneath  
And let your bridegroom be the Lord of Death,  
While body-burners tend the new-made bride  
And with their torches warm your wrinkled side.

\* XCIV

### *TO RUFUS*

You call for a whip, crying out that the hare  
Has been sent up half-raw to the table.  
You can't cut its flesh, as you loudly declare,  
But to cut up the cook you'll be able.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XCV

## TO NAEVOLUS

You greet no man till first he says ' Good day ' ;  
Even a talking crow is more polite ;  
Why should I yield you this precedence pray ;  
Are you my better by repute or right ?

Two Caesars praised me, and for my renown  
A father's due is mine, in spite of fate,  
My fame and works are known in every town,  
No posthumous reward I need await.

That I was tribune all the world doth know,  
You are debarred from sitting with the knights ;  
You boast a few dependants ; many owe,  
By Caesar's grace, to me their Roman rights.

And yet you have a claim I freely own  
And hold one title I cannot gainsay.  
In vice you stand pre-eminent alone ;  
I yield precedence. Naevolus, Good day !

\* XCVI

## TO GARGILIUS

JUST because you once kissed my dear girl on the sly,  
You go bragging that you are her lover.  
If you do it, Gargilius, when I am by,  
Your boasting will soon be all over.

\* XCVII

## TO RUFUS

LET Chione not read this book,  
Which does her charms attack ;  
For if I don't misjudge her look,  
She'll get her own well back.

XCVIII

SIT culus tibi quam macer, requiris,  
Paedicare potes, Sabelle, culo.

## BOOK THREE

### XCIX

#### *TO THE COBBLER PARVENU*

NAY, why resent the jest I made ?  
Your anger pray subdue ;  
I only pointed at your trade,  
Good cobbler, not at you.

Let not the harmless line I wrote  
Your enmity provoke ;  
You slit a gladiator's throat—  
May I not crack a joke ?

### C

#### *A BOON FROM HEAVEN*

THE rain at midday, when I sent to you,  
Must needs have soaked both book and bearer through.  
How excellently timed ! The sky no doubt  
Sent down its flood to wash my blunders out.



BOOK FOUR





\* I

*DOMITIAN'S BIRTHDAY*

O HAPPY day, more hallowed than the morn  
 When on consenting Ida Jove was born,  
 Come oft I pray and Nestor's years outrun,  
 Matching our Emperor's glory with thy sun.  
 Long may he Pallas court, in Alba's gold,  
 Long in proud hand the oak-leaf garland hold,  
 And even when a hundred years have flown  
 May the Great Games still see him on the throne.  
 A wondrous gift, yet owed to earth by fate !  
 And for a god so high no vows can seem too great.

II

*THE HAPPY CHANCE*

HORATIUS sat the games to see,  
 Unseemly black he wore ;  
 Tho' all were clad in white save he  
 From churl to senator.

Then fell the snow (for heaven conspired  
 To set the error right),  
 Until, more decently attired,  
 Horatius sat in white.

III

*THE SNOWSTORM IN THE CIRCUS*

THE silent snow a fleece doth cast  
 On Caesar's breast and flecks his hair,  
 He scorns the frost and frozen blast  
 And humours Jove, half unaware.  
 Who spurned Bootes and the Bear  
 With dripping locks, may well defy  
 Those flakes—the toys his little heir  
 Has dropped while playing in the sky.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* IV

## TO BASSA

STENCH from the pools of marshes newly drained,  
Vapours from springs that bubble sulphur-stained,  
Reek of a fish-pond old and salt and black,  
Of he-goat straining on his partner's back,  
Of soldiers' boots, when they have been long worn,  
Of Jews who take no food on Sabbath morn,  
Of fleeces dipped too much in purple dye,  
Of criminals as loud they sob and sigh ;  
Leda's foul lamp whose fumes the ceiling soil,  
Ointment that's made from lees of Sabine oil,  
A fox in flight, a viper in her lair,  
All these compared with you are perfumes rare.

V

## SUCCESS

WHAT brings you, friend, to Rome ? You so upright  
So poor and (worse) sincere in word and heart !  
How can you play the pimp or parasite,  
Or stoop to act the vile informer's part ?  
Or would you join the foul seducer's tribe,  
Betray a friend, court passion-freezing hags,  
Feign friendship with the great, to get a bribe,  
Roar hired applause when Canus' acting flags ?  
' A loyal friend am I and worthy trust,'  
You say. Poor honest wretch ! no hope is there,  
Here such an one shall never earn a crust,  
Whilst Philomelus dies a millionaire.

\* VI

## TO MALISIANUS

A POET at Stella's attempted to gull us  
By reading us verse in the style of Tibullus,  
The low dirty rogue ; but I'd have you to know  
He is not so dirty or roguish as you  
Who pretend that your cheeks are with soft blushes laden,  
And wish us to fancy that you are a maiden.

## BOOK FOUR

### \* VII

#### *TO HYLLUS*

YESTERDAY you gave a kiss,  
Now from me you fly ;  
Tell me, pray, the cause of this  
Wanton cruelty.

‘ I am growing old,’—you say,  
‘ And must careful be.’  
Nay, it was but yesterday  
When you kissed me !

### VIII

#### *THE DAILY ROUTINE*

EXACTING patrons claim the first two hours,  
The third doth show the raucous pleader’s powers,  
The fourth and fifth in business Rome doth spend,  
The sixth gives pause, the seventh brings labour’s end ;  
The eighth to manly sports and baths assign,  
And at the ninth take cushioned ease and dine ;  
The tenth should be the season for my books,  
When by your care, Euphemus, and the cook’s,  
On food ambrosial god-like Caesar sups  
And drains the nectar from but modest cups ;  
Then usher in my little jests I pray—  
Jove is too busy earlier in the day.

### \* IX

#### *A DEGENERATE DAUGHTER*

DR GOODMAN’S young daughter has taken a lover,  
And for his fine eyes thrown her own husband over ;  
She’s giving him money too. Oh, what a shame !  
She does not live up to the family name.

### X

#### *TO FAUSTINUS WITH HIS BOOK*

THE scroll is new, still rough at either end,  
The ink, scarce dry, no careless touch may brook,  
Yet haste and bear it to my dearest friend ;  
Ere he has seen, none else thereon shall look :



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Go armed, my slave. As comrade for the book  
Take this large sponge, a fitting gift to send.  
A pen might not avail to mend each joke,  
But this can do it at a single stroke.

\* XI

## *TO ANTONIUS SATURNINUS, A REVOLTING GOVERNOR*

THE name of Saturninus you refused,  
And in vain pride Antonius only used,  
When 'neath the northern Bear you roused such strife,  
As he who warred with his Egyptian wife.  
Hadst thou forgotten, wretch, thy namesake's fate  
Crushed by God's vengeance in the Actian strait,  
Or did Rhine promise what the Nile ne'er gave?  
Didst think more might was in the Arctic wave?  
Antony beneath our swords his lot did rue;  
And he a Caesar was compared to you.

\* XII

## *THE UNIVERSAL PROVIDER*

AT night no man do you refuse,  
And what is worse, dear Nancy,  
There's nothing you refuse to do,  
Whatever be his fancy.

XIII

## *AN EPITHALAMIUM*

PUDENS to-day his Claudia doth claim  
In love united,  
A blessing, Hymen, on the twofold flame  
Thy torch hath lighted.  
These are as honey poured in rarest wine;  
Could aught be meet?  
Not cinnamon with spikenard could combine  
In fragrance sweeter.

## BOOK FOUR

Beside this tender vine her elm doth tower  
His might to give her.  
She is the myrtle sweet, the lotus flower,  
And he her river.  
Fair Concord ever o'er their lives preside  
Unviolated ;  
Dear Venus bless the bridegroom and the bride  
So fitly mated ;  
And may the coming years so far and dim  
No change discover,  
But she be loving still and fair to him,  
Her grey-haired lover.

\* XIV

### *TO SILIUS ITALICUS*

PRIDE of our Muses, who in deathless strain  
Dost prove the tricks of frenzied foemen vain,  
And make the wiles of Hannibal to yield  
To gallant Scipio on Zama's field,  
Prithee, dear Silius, banish for a while  
These tasks severe, and on my verses smile.  
When mad December with her dice-box rattles,  
Forget thy tale of sieges and of battles,  
And in these days of mirth and mischief choose  
The merry triflings of my sportive Muse.  
So gay Catullus once, O noble friend,  
To mighty Maro did his ' Sparrow ' send.

XV

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

TEN pounds you asked ; then, failing to persuade me  
(Though in a week it was to be repaid me),  
You said a guest was due upon the morrow,  
And so my silver-plate you tried to borrow.  
Are you a fool or I ?—'Twere hardly thrifty  
To save the ten and give the worth of fifty !

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XVI

## TO GALLUS

To your father's young wife in his lifetime you were  
Something more than a stepson, so people aver.  
It could not be proved while he lived, it is true,  
But now he's departed she still stays with you.  
It's a case ; were great Tully alive he could lend you  
No aid, nor could Regulus even defend you.  
When she chooses your stepmother still to remain  
She was never a proper stepmother, that's plain.

\* XVII

## TO PAULUS

' WRITE a piece to Lycisca,' you bid me, ' that she  
May blush with annoyance her portrait to see.'  
You're an artful, sly fellow, and that you must own ;  
You want by yourself to enjoy her alone.

\* XVIII

## THE LIQUID DAGGER

O CRUEL fate. Where now is death not found ?  
What licence is not yours when waters wound ?  
Where the gate drips hard by Vipsania's Hall,  
And from the slippery stones the raindrops fall,  
On a boy's throat as he passed by beneath  
The frozen water fell—and brought him death :  
A weighted dagger ; then, its fell task done,  
In his warm flesh it melted, and was gone.

\* XIX

## WITH THE GIFT OF A CLOAK

THIS cloak that on Sequanian looms was born,  
A gift right welcome on a winter's morn,  
I send you now : in Sparta it is famed,  
Though it be rough, and *endromis* is named.  
Whether well-oiled you wrestle in the lists,  
Or punch the light-stuffed ball with eager fists,

## BOOK FOUR

Or in the dust the flying bladder chase,  
Or seek to conquer Athas in the race,  
'Twill serve to keep the cold from heated limbs  
And save you from the rainstorm's sudden whims.  
Your Tyrian muslins are but shelter vain ;  
Clad in this gift you'll laugh at wind and rain.

### XX

#### *OLD AND YOUNG*

CAERELLIA, but a chit, apes womanhood,  
Old Gellia affects a skittish mood :  
How can one bear with either, and adjust  
The divers claims of laughter and disgust ?

### XXI

#### *THE TEST OF FACTS*

WHEN Segius declaims he knows  
That Heaven is void and gods are not,  
It is because his record shows  
That knaves may have a prosperous lot.

### \* XXII

#### *THE BATHER*

FAIR Nelly, just wedded and still a coy bride,  
To escape from embraces plunged in the bright tide.  
But the treacherous water refused to conceal her,  
And the deeper she plunged, the more clear did reveal her.  
So shut in clear glass you may count lilies white,  
So crystal displays a red rose-bud to sight.  
I leaped in behind her, and snatched a sly kiss,  
Though the water prevented perfection of bliss.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXIII

## *THE MUSE'S PRIZE*

MAKE thine award, Thalia, cease  
To dally. Canst thou not discern  
Who for the epigrams of Greece  
The first and second crowns should earn ?  
Go to Callimachus and learn  
That Brutianus first must be ;  
And if from Greece to Rome he turn,  
Give thou the second place to me !

XXIV

## *A USEFUL FRIEND*

THEY say your lady friends have no long life,  
Lycoris—Let me introduce my wife.

\* XXV

## *A PLEASANT RETREAT*

ALTINUM's shore that can with Baiae vie,  
And the green woods that saw young Phaethon die,  
And thou fair Sola who didst Faunus wed  
And in Euganean waters hast thy bed,  
And Aquileia with Timarus blessed  
Where Castor's steed the sevenfold stream possessed,  
If in old age my choice be given free,  
You shall my place of rest, my haven be.

XXVI

## *THE CLIENT'S FEE*

ARE you anxious to hear what I lost in a year  
By giving up calling on you ?  
'Twas a guinea at most ; pray excuse me, good host,  
A second-rate toga costs two.

## BOOK FOUR

### XXVII

#### *ON A JEALOUS RIVAL*

CAESAR, I know you often praise  
My books—and will it change your wont  
That yonder jealous rascal says  
You don't ?

If rumoured words his anger stir,  
His envious wrath must rise anew  
At boons no other could confer,  
Save you.

He gnaws his grimy nails for spite,  
Just watch him turning livid green ;  
Grant me fresh bounties to excite  
His spleen.

### \* XXVIII

#### *TO CHLOE*

You give Spanish cloaks to Lupercus as hire,  
Their wool dyed in scarlet and purple of Tyre,  
And a toga new dipped in Galesus' warm tide,  
Sardonyx from India and emeralds beside,  
And a hundred new sovereigns fresh from the mint ;  
Whatever he asks for you grant without stint.  
His skin may be smooth and his cheeks may be fair ;  
But your stripling Lupercus will soon strip you bare.

### XXIX

#### *TO PUDENS*

THEIR wealth has wrought my verses harm,  
Their sated reader yawns and dozes ;  
'Tis rarity gives books their charm,  
Like early fruits or winter roses.

Let mistresses be coy and hard,  
And men will spend their all to win them ;  
If doors are never shut and barred  
They cannot draw young love within them.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A single volume Persius wrote,  
But this in every heart enshrined him ;  
How many now could read or quote  
The epics Marsus left behind him ?

So if you read a book of mine,  
Think it my only publication ;  
I know more brightly it will shine  
In that imagined isolation.

\* XXX

### *A WARNING TO FISHERMEN*

Go from our Baian Lake, I bid thee go,  
Ere thou the guilt of sacrilege allow.  
Holy the fish that swim about this strand ;  
They know their Lord, and fawn upon the hand  
That is on earth most mighty, and withal  
They have their names and answer to his call.  
An impious wretch from Africa's dark shore  
Was drawing from this deep his prey of yore,  
When sudden blindness fell upon his eyes,  
Nor could he longer see his watery prize.  
So now he holds his cursed hooks in hate,  
And as a beggar sits at Baiae's gate.  
Revere these dainty fish and with pure heart  
Cast them a guileless meal and then depart.

XXXI

### *THE DIFFICULT RHYME*

WRITE you an epigram ? When you suggested it,  
Friend, I was flattered that you had requested it.  
Is it an honour ? I pledge you my word on it,  
If my poor verses a lustre conferred on it,  
Gladly I'd mention your name from regard to you,  
Had not your mother been cruelly hard to you.  
Names so unmetrical, sesquipedalian,  
Dry up the source of the fountain Castalian,  
Melpomene will not whisper or mutter it,  
None of her sisters nor Phoebus can utter it.  
Get you another the Muses think better of,  
This is a word I can't use the last letter of ;  
' Hippodamê,' little grace I can see in it,  
Though, to be sure, I might end with the ' e ' in it.

XXXII

*ON A BEE IN AMBER*

THE bee, as though enshrined in honey clear,  
Is seen imprisoned in an amber tear  
Of Phaethusa or Lampetie ;  
A just reward hast thou, O toiler bee ;  
Methinks that gladly thou hast met thy doom,  
Content to lie within a golden tomb.

XXXIII

*POSTHUMOUS PUBLICATION*

PACKED in your desk your finished verses lurk,  
Or so you say. Pray, let us read your work.  
' My heirs,' you say, ' shall give the world that boon.'  
Oh, give those heirs the chance to publish soon !

\* XXXIV

*TO ATTALUS*

YOUR rags are grimy, but they've worn so thin  
To call them ' snow-flakes ' were no mortal sin.

\* XXXV

*A STRANGE SPECTACLE*

WE have seen gentle deer charging on head to head,  
And meeting together, together fall dead,  
While the hounds stood amazed at this new sort of strife,  
And the huntsman found nothing to do for his knife.  
What frenzy to weaklings such fire could supply ?  
In this fashion bulls fight, in this fashion men die.

XXXVI

*THE CONTRAST*

YOUR locks are raven black, your beard is grey.  
Well, wigs are easier to dye they say.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXXVII

*TO AFER*

' ONE thousand pounds Coranus owes to me,  
Mancinus two, and Titius owes three,  
Albinus owes just twice as much, and then  
Sabinus and Serranus each owe ten ;  
My flats and farms give thirty thousand clear,  
My Parma sheep bring sixty in each year '—  
That's how you talk, and every day's the same ;  
I know it better than I know my name.  
Unpaid I can no more your tales endure ;  
They bring a nausea only cash can cure.

XXXVIII

*TO GALLA*

GALLA, say ' no '—Tease love and you renew it.  
But prithee, Galla, do not overdo it.

XXXIX

*TO CHARINUS*

YOUR masterpieces rich and rare  
Are priceless and antique ;  
Scopas is represented there,  
Your ' Myrons ' are unique ;

Reliefs that Phidias' graver wrought,  
Cups by Praxiteles,  
' Mentors ' by others vainly sought  
Bear company with these.

You do not honour Greece alone  
Nor later work disdain ;  
Here are the finest ' Gratiens ' known,  
There gold inlay from Spain.

Heirlooms these bas-reliefs must be,  
They show ancestral taste.  
How strange—You are a debauchee,  
But all your plate is chased !

## \* XL

*TO POSTUMUS*

WHEN the wise Senecas adorned our age  
 And Piso's house with all its lineage,  
 To those great patrons you I did prefer ;  
 You, a poor knight, to me a consul were.  
 Full thirty years have passed since that first day  
 When you and I on the same pallet lay ;  
 And now you're rich, an honoured magistrate,  
 With brimming purse :—yet still your gifts I wait.  
 The time has gone another lord to find ;  
 Had Fortune known, she had not been so kind.

## XLI

*TO A DELICATE POET*

'Tis but your throat you guard with wool  
 Ere you recite your verse.  
 I pray you be more pitiful,  
 Our ears will suffer worse.

## \* XLII

*TO FLACCUS*

IF any one wishes to give me a slave,  
 I will mention the points I would wish him to have.  
 First of all, I should like him from Egypt to come,  
 For he'll be a sly rogue if the Nile is his home.  
 Let his cheeks too be whiter than snow ; in those lands  
 That colour is rare and its value commands.  
 Let his eyes vie with stars and his hair wanton free  
 O'er his shoulders ; close-braided locks do not please me.  
 Let his forehead be low and his nose aquiline,  
 Let his lips on the roses of Paestum refine.  
 Let him court me unwilling, refuse me when fain,  
 And ever more free than his master remain,  
 For me but a boy, to the world a man grown,  
 Who as friends neither youths nor yet maidens will own.  
 ' I know him,' you say,—' you need not make this fuss ;  
 The boy that you mean's my Amazonicus.'

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XLIII

### *TO CORACINUS*

CALL you by nature vicious? Nay  
That hardly needs denying,  
For such a thing I dare not say,  
Besides, I love not lying.

From Pontia's flagon let me sup  
If e'er I thought or said it,  
Or even share Metilius' cup,  
Although the boldest dread it.

By Cybele's mad retinue,  
By every raving minion  
In Isis' train, I hold of you  
The contrary opinion.

I passed a trifling comment, far  
From false or injudicious,  
And called you, what you know you are,  
Unnaturally vicious.

## XLIV

### *ON THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS, A.D. 79*

FAIR were thy shading vines and rich to fill  
The overflowing wine-press year by year,  
Bacchus hath loved thee more than Nysa's hill,  
Vesuvius, for his fauns held revel here ;  
Sweet Venus held no other haunt so dear,  
Alcides made thee glorious with his name,  
Flame-swept art thou, a waste of ashes drear,  
And heaven remorseful hides its face for shame.

## XLV

### *PARTHENIUS MAKES OFFERING TO PHOEBUS ON HIS SON'S FIFTH BIRTHDAY*

TAKE my glad offering, Phoebus ; for my son  
This fragrant censer have I filled to thee,  
For now his second lustrum has begun  
And many a new Olympiad let him see.

## BOOK FOUR

Kind be thy tree-love so thou favour me ;  
In stainless glory let thy sister shine ;  
Yet brighter may thine ageless beauty be  
And Bromius' tresses never vie with thine.

\* XLVI

### *A LAWYER'S BAG*

SABELLUS looks haughty ; there's reason for pride ;  
He's made a good harvest this last Christmastide ;  
And he thinks and declares to the junior Bar  
That he's the most lucky of pleaders by far.  
The reasons that make him so puffed up are these,  
I'll give you the whole catalogue, if you please—  
To begin with, a half peck of flour and ground rice  
And a pound and a half of frankincense and spice,  
Lucanian sausage, Falerian ham,  
And a pot filled with African figs boiled to jam,  
A Syrian flagon of dark syrup wine,  
Fat onions and cheeses and snails really fine ;  
From a client who lives in Picenum he got  
A box with some olives—a very poor lot—  
A napkin adorned with a senator's band,  
And seven small cups made to fit in a stand  
Which a potter had fashioned in Spain far away.  
And had done quite a deal of embossing—in clay !  
No wonder Sabellus feels self-satisfied ;  
He's beaten the record this last Christmastide.

XLVII

### *ON A PICTURE OF PHAETHON IN ENCAUSTIC COLOURS*

ENCAUSTIC artist, alter your device ;  
'Tis Phaethon, you should not burn him twice.

\* XLVIII

### *TO PAPYLUS*

' I'LL scream if you touch me '—exclaimed a pert miss,  
When her lover attempted an innocent kiss.  
But when he gave up and made ready to go,  
The damsel cried louder—' I'll scream till you do.'



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XLIX

### *POPULAR TASTE*

Who sneers at epigrams and feigns to scout them,  
Believe me, does not know a thing about them.  
The real bores are the dreary epic spinners  
Who rant of Tereus' or Thyestes' dinners,  
Who rave of cunning Daedalus applying  
The wings to Icarus to teach him flying,  
Or else to show what dullards they esteem us  
Bleat endless pastorals on Polyphemus.  
My unpretentious Muse is not bombastic,  
But deems these robes of Tragedy fantastic.  
'Such things,' you say, 'earn all men's commendation,  
As works of genius and inspiration.'  
Ah, very true—these pompous, classic leaders  
Do get the praise—but then I get the readers!

## L

### *COMPARISONS*

THAIS, you say that I am old. 'Tis true :  
But how could any be too old for you ?

## LI

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

WHEN poor, a lordly coach and six  
Conveyed you everywhere ;  
Then you became by fortune's tricks  
A multi-millionaire.

But though she gave that bulging purse  
And blindly bade you thrive,  
Your former habits you reverse  
And 'can't afford to drive.'

'Tis plain such simple manners earn  
Reward and not reproach.  
I'll pray the gods in just return  
To give you back your coach.

## LII

GESTARI iunctis nisi desinis, Hedyle, capris,  
 Qui modo ficus eras, iam caprificus eris.

## LIII

*THE BEGGAR*

SEE that old knave by Pallas' shrine,  
 He lurks there when the weather's fine,  
 Or favours, if it chance to rain,  
 The doorway of our nearest fane ;  
 With staff and scrip he lounges there  
 With ragged beard and matted hair ;  
 That greasy cloak at night is spread,  
 The only blanket, on his bed.  
 He snarls and whines to passers-by  
 Who fling him scraps for charity.  
 You say, misled by signs like these,  
 ' Some pupil of Diogenes ' ?  
 Nay, he is no philosopher,  
 But less a cynic than a cur.

## LIV

*TO COLLINUS*

THE wreath of honoured oak is on thy brow,  
 Thine is the noblest prize the Muse can give,  
 Well was that guerdon merited, but now  
 If thou be wise, Collinus, learn to live.  
 Henceforth forget ambition and begin  
 To live each day as though thou hadst but one ;  
 For who has ever moved the maids that spin  
 To toil a moment when their task is done ?  
 Were Thræsea's courage there, with Crispus' gold  
 And Melior's lavish hand, 'twere all in vain ;  
 For Lachesis should never be cajoled,  
 Thy portion done, to turn the wheel again ;  
 The thread her sisters wove, doth she unwind.  
 Three are the Fates, and there should ever be  
 One merciless, inexorable mind  
 To spurn thy prayer, though two had pitied thee.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LV

## *THE GLORIES OF SPAIN*

LUCIUS, who art the glory of thy time,  
And wilt not let the splendours of our clime,  
Tagus and ancient Caius, yield in fame  
To Arpi's eloquence and ancient name :  
Let those who first in Hellas saw the light,  
Sing of Mycenae and the Thebans' might,  
Of famous Rhodes and Sparta's wrestling-game,  
Where wanton Leda stripped nor thought of shame.  
But let us Celts, true sons of Spanish soil,  
Blush not for her to spend the midnight oil.  
And bid our Muses boldly to rehearse  
Our country's rugged names in grateful verse.  
First, Bilbilis, whose steel doth far outshine  
The Chalyb metal and the Noric mine.  
Then Platea, which restless Salo rings,  
Noisy with iron, and keen temper brings  
To her sharp swords ; and Rixamae's fair plains,  
Where with the god to guide the gay dance reigns.  
Then Carduae, whose revels fill the night,  
And Peteris with rosy garlands bright,  
And Rigae, where our fathers played of old,  
And Silaë so skilled the spear to hold.  
Turguntum's lake, Perusia's still mere,  
And little Tuetonissa's shallows clear,  
The oaks of Buradon, the god's own place,  
Which even lazy travellers love to pace,  
The fields of Vativesca on the hills  
Which Manlius with sturdy bullocks tills.  
Perhaps at this some dainty reader smiled,  
And said—' My friend, these names are rather wild,'  
They may be so indeed, but I aver  
That these to your Butonti I prefer.

LVI

## *TRUE GENEROSITY*

You generous ! Some childless crone  
Or dotard you propitiate ;  
What meaner knave was ever known ?  
The angler's trick you emulate ;  
When witless creatures take the bait,  
Is that a gift ? Then yours may be ;  
The better way to indicate  
Your claim is this—to give to me.

\* LVII

*TO FAUSTINUS*

WHILE near the wanton Lucrine I delay  
 And in warm springs by rocky caverns play,  
 You dwell, Faustinus, twenty miles from town,  
 Where once Catillus did his kingdom own.  
 But now when Leo burns with furious ire  
 And Baiae glows with more than native fire,  
 Farewell, ye pleasant shores, ye sacred wells,  
 Where Nereid with Nymph united dwells.  
 Surpass our heights in winter, if you will :  
 But in the summer yield to Tibur's hill.

\* LVIII

*TO GALLA*

IT is not your ' man ' that you mourn, but your ' spouse ' ;  
 For the open truth modesty scarcely allows.

\* LIX

*ON A SNAKE IN AMBER*

A VIPER crept along a poplar bough,  
 When lo, the amber drops that therefrom flow  
 With clinging moisture stayed her on her way  
 And fettered by the gum congealed she lay.  
 Let Cleopatra boast no more her grave,  
 When tiny vipers such a burial have.

LX

*ON THE TOMB OF CURIATIUS AT TIBUR*

Now must we say, if thou be wise  
 In summer's heat to Ardea turn,  
 Or seek the plain where Castrum lies  
 And the hot stars of Leo burn.

He that is laid in yonder grave  
 Saith, ' Tarry not but get thee gone.'  
 Here sought he Arno's healing wave,  
 But found the stream of Acheron ?



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Yet what shall stay the march of death ?  
When he is come and calleth thee,  
Sardinia's fever-laden breath  
Shall taint the air of Tivoli.

\* LXI

### *TO MANCINUS*

LAST week you came up with a smile of content,  
And whispered—' Two thousand a friend just has sent.'  
While three days ago, when we met at the club,  
You said, as I happened your mantle to rub,  
—' That's a gift from Pompulla ; it cost eighty pound '—  
Then displayed a sardonyx with lines all around  
And two rings beside, both with green jewels set,  
—' These are gifts that from Bassa and Caelia I get.'  
And again in the theatre last night you went out  
While Pollio was playing, but found time to shout,  
—' A friend has bequeathed me three thousand by will—  
And to-day there's been two other legacies still.'  
What wrong have we done you, who treat you as friend ?  
Have pity and make of this boasting an end.  
Or if you can't silence your tongue, as I fear,  
At least tell us something that's pleasant to hear.

\* LXII

### *A BEAUTY RECIPE*

LYCORIS to Tibur has taken her flight ;  
For she fancies that everything there becomes white.

\* LXIII

### *TO CAERELLIA*

ALAS, poor mother, as you made your way  
Across from Bauli to fair Baiae's bay  
A tempest whelmed you 'neath the frenzied sea,  
Which lost that day its name for piety.  
Fierce Nero bade these waves his mother drown ;  
They loathed such guilt, nor feared the tyrant's frown.

## \* LXIV

*COUNTRY IN TOWN*

THE fields that Julius my namesake know  
 For owner, though they be but few, I trow,  
 On the Janiculum more happy rest  
 Than all the fabled islands of the blest.  
 Their sheltered acres from the hills rise high,  
 Whose level summit takes the clearer sky,  
 And even when thick mists the valley drown  
 It shines with brightness that is all its own,  
 While in the night the farmhouse gables seem  
 To lift to heaven to catch the starry gleam.  
 On this side, you may see the Seven Hills  
 And mark the space that our great city fills,  
 The heights of Tusculum and Alba's home  
 And all the cool suburban haunts of Rome,  
 Red Roofs, and old Fidenae, and the trees  
 Where with a maiden's blood we Anna please.  
 On that, the Flaminian and Salarian way  
 Their noiseless stream of travellers display,  
 Whose distant wheels disturb not your repose,  
 And though near by the sacred Tiber flows  
 Beneath the Milvian Bridge, no bargemen's noise  
 Nor sailors' shout breaks in upon your joys.  
 Whether 'tis country or a town estate,  
 Its master most doth grace it, and his gate  
 Is ever open, generous and free ;  
 You'd think it might your own dominion be.  
 Alcinoüs was not a kinder host,  
 Molorchus could not readier welcome boast.  
 Let those who this a tiny cot suppose,  
 Till all Praeneste with a hundred hoes,  
 Give to one tenant Setia on the hill,  
 But let me choose my friend's few acres still.

## LXV

*A PARADOX*

SHE weeps from but one eye ! How is it done ?  
 Quite easily. Philaenis has but one.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXVI

### *THE COUNTRY LIFE*

LINUS, the country ever was your home,  
How cheap that life, how costly ours in Rome !  
You shake the creases of your toga out,  
Say once a month. A single suit, no doubt,  
Will last ten seasons ere its work be done—  
Though at the first 'twas not a costly one ;  
Your woods provide a boar, your fields a hare !  
To meet your simple needs ; for richer fare  
You beat the copse for thrushes, and of fish  
Your river yields you freely many a dish.  
No costly wines imported from afar  
You ever need to fill your Samian jar ;  
No slave from dainty Greece doth call you lord,  
But home-bred clowns attend your rustic board ;  
From fire and drought your house and lands are free,  
You never lost or risked a ship at sea ;  
At knuckle-bones you stake a nut or two  
But keep the guileful dice-box far from you ;  
Your mother too, whose passion was to hoard,  
Left you a million, yet you can't afford  
To spend or give—'Tis gone, so you aver.  
Untouched, yet gone ? You are a conjurer.

## \* LXVII

*' RICH TO HIMSELF, BUT TO HIS COMRADES POOR '*

GAURUS, a poor but ancient friend,  
Said to the prætor—' Will you lend  
One thousand to me, for my three  
Will then a sum sufficient be  
That in the circus I may take my seat,  
And as a knight our Emperor duly greet.'

To him the prætor answer made—  
' I cannot help you, I'm afraid ;  
For to my jockeys I bestow  
More than the sum you say you owe.'  
Shame on that thankless purse, I fain would cry ;  
You give to horses—and to knights deny.

## BOOK FOUR

### LXVIII

#### *TO SEXTUS*

YOURSELF you dine in great magnificence,  
And give your guest the worth of twenty pence ;  
Say, Sextus, did you ask me here to-night  
To jog my envy or my appetite ?

### LXIX

#### *A DOUBTFUL VINTAGE*

SETINE and Massic at your board abound,  
Yet some aver your wine is hardly sound ;  
'Twas this relieved you of four wives they say ;  
A<sub>u</sub>libel—but I will not dine to-day.

### LXX

#### *ON AMMIANUS*

HE wishes that his sire were living still,  
'Tis strange, but with the truth I do not palter ;  
The reason is he read that father's will  
And found his only legacy a halter.

### LXXI

#### *TO RUFUS*

I'VE searched through all the town to find  
A maiden of reluctant mind,  
And yet in Rome I can't discover  
One girl who will refuse a lover.  
Is it considered base and low  
For any maid to murmur ' no ' ?  
Or is it by the law forbid ?  
I never met a girl who did.  
' And can one find no modest fair ? '  
You ask—a thousand anywhere.  
' These coyer damsels, what do they ? '  
Why, mean the ' yes ' they do not say.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXII

## *PRESENTATION COPIES*

YOU want a copy of my works you say ;  
I can't supply it—but the bookshops may.  
'What ? waste your coin on trash ?' you make reply,  
'Am I a fool ?' No, Quintus ; nor am I.

\* LXXIII

## *A NOBLE END*

VESTINUS was ill and drew near his last breath,  
A traveller bound for the waters beneath,  
When he prayed the dark sisters to hold back the thread  
And grant him a respite ere he should lie dead.  
His words moved the Fates, for it was as a friend  
He was thinking of others, not of his own end.  
He shared out his wealth as in bed he did lie,  
And then was content, like an old man, to die.

\* LXXIV

## *A STRANGE SIGHT IN THE CIRCUS*

SEE how the timid deer the strife essay,  
What anger stirs them to the deadly fray.  
Each doe with brow unhorned her rival wounds ;  
If you would save them, sire, set on the hounds.

\* LXXV

## *TO NIGRINA*

O BLEST in soul and in your husband blest,  
Of Latin wives the noblest now confessed,  
Content to share the wealth your father gave  
And grant your spouse his own due part to have.  
Let fair Evadne grace her husband's pyre,  
Alcestis to immortal fame aspire ;  
You have done better, for in life you prove  
By certain pledge the sureness of your love.

## BOOK FOUR

\* LXXVI

### *A MULTIPLICATION SUM*

I ASKED you a loan of one hundred to send,  
But you say that you only have fifty to lend.  
Well, now in the future I know what to do ;  
When I want just a hundred, I'll ask you for two.

LXXVII

### *ON ZOILUS*

CONTENTED with my little store,  
I've never asked the gods for more ;  
Now, Poverty, retire.  
Why have I grown so covetous ?  
Because I know that Zoilus  
Will hang himself for ire.

\* LXXVIII

### *TO AFER*

YOUR sixtieth summer has passed, you old frisker,  
And your cheeks are snow-white with a forest of whisker,  
But yet you go gadding all over the city,  
And at each sedan-chair every morning are witty.  
When a tribune appears, you are sure to attend him,  
If a consul comes out, then your escort you lend him ;  
Ten times to the palace you climb the steep hill,  
And your talk is of nothing but chamberlains still.  
Young men may behave in this fashion no doubt ;  
But there's nothing looks worse than an old gadabout.

\* LXXIX

### *TO MATHO*

OF my villa at Tibur you now are possessed,  
And reside in the house where you oft were a guest.  
You have bought it from me and have paid the cash down :  
Well, you're gulled ; what you've bought was already your  
own.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXX

*TO MARON*

YOU'RE burning with fever, but still you recite ;  
If you don't see you're mad, then you're really not right.  
If you want to perspire, no more's to be said ;  
But a tertian ague should see you in bed.  
' It's important,' you say. Nay, in that you're quite wrong ;  
It's important in fevers to keep a still tongue.

\* LXXXI

*'CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES'*

FABULLA had read what I wrote long ago,  
Complaining that girls don't know when to say ' no.'  
So when for her favours I humbly applied,  
Once, twice, and three times my request was denied.  
Noes should not be final, I freely confess :  
There's a time, dear Fabulla, when girls should say ' yes.'

\* LXXXII

*TO RUFUS*

To Venuleius these two books commend,  
And beg that he to us his leisure lend  
As kindly critic, nor for business care,  
And for these trifles his attention spare.  
But give them to him midway through the feast,  
Not when it starts nor when it just has ceased ;  
And if two seem too much, then split the ream ;  
The work divided thus will briefer seem.

\* LXXXIII

*TO NAEVOLUS*

YOUR manners are horrid, when business goes right ;  
We are slaves, left ungreeted, mere dogs in your sight.  
But when you're in trouble they're quite superfine ;  
Then it's ' master,' ' good sir,' ' pray come with me to dine.'  
I'm your friend, my dear fellow, and don't wish you ill :  
But I hope that you stay in adversity still.

## BOOK FOUR

### LXXXIV

NON est in populo nec urbe tota  
A se Thaida qui probet fututam,  
Cum multi cupiant rogentque multi.  
Tam casta est, rogo, Thais ? immo fellat.

### \* LXXXV

#### *TO PONTICUS*

YOUR guests' cups are glass, but your own's alabaster,  
And so we can't see what wine's served to the master.

### \* LXXXVI

#### *TO HIS BOOK*

IF you desire to please an Attic taste,  
I warn you to Apollinaris haste,  
And try to win him, for you will not find  
A man more learned or a man more kind.  
If he shall take you to his heart and lips,  
You need not fear base jealousy's eclipse,  
Nor will you serve, like a condemned man's sheet,  
To wrap up mackerel in every street.  
But if he frowns, then you must take your way  
And lie exposed on the fishmonger's tray,  
That salted herrings in you may be tied,  
And children scrawl upon your other side.

### \* LXXXVII

#### *TO FABULLUS*

YOUR Bassa continually has by her seat  
A baby ; she calls it her popsy and sweet.  
And yet she's not partial to children I find ;  
The reason ? Poor Bassa is troubled with wind.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXXVIII

## *QUID PRO QUO*

SATURN'S feast is past and gone,  
And of gifts from you not one ;  
Not an ounce of silver-plate,  
Nor a napkin, brought of late  
By a disappointed friend,  
For my present; did you send.  
Not a jar with fish-sauce red,  
Into which a tunny bled ;  
No dry olives in a pottle,  
From Picenum, nor a bottle  
Of small Syrian figs to be  
Sign that you remembered me.  
Other people you may cheat,  
Smiling at them when you meet ;  
But you won't gull me again,  
For your trickery is plain.

LXXXIX

## *FINIS*

HOLD, little book, enough, enough !  
Here is the end of the scroll and thee ;  
Stay thy course ere the path grow rough,  
Keep thy bounds for thou art not free,  
Many thy sheets, though one should be  
Ample space for thy sorry stuff.  
Hold, little book, enough, enough !  
Here is the end of the scroll and thee.  
Wearied readers are harsh and gruff,  
Now are they tired of thee and me ;  
Soon thou shalt meet a rude rebuff,  
List to the worn-out scrivener's plea ;  
' Hold, little book, enough, enough ! '

BOOK FIVE



\* I

*TO DOMITIAN*

WHETHER on Alba's hills, great sire, thou be,  
 And hence Diana, thence fair Thetis, see ;  
 Or where near Rome the Ocean's levels sleep,  
 The fateful sisters do thy answers keep ;  
 Whether green Circë, the sun's fairest child,  
 Or great Aeneas' nurse holds thee beguiled,  
 Or gleaming Anxur with health-giving stream—  
 I send this book to thee, whose life we deem  
 By grateful Jove is guarded to the end,  
 Our country's saviour, helper, keeper, friend.  
 Receive it, sire ; then I'll be satisfied  
 And think you read it, in my Gallic pride.

II

*THE VIRTUOUS PRINCE*

Boys, matrons, gentle maids, for you  
 This modest little book is fit ;  
 My earlier pages search anew,  
 Ye that rejoice in wanton wit,  
 But this for Caesar's eye was writ,  
 And dare not face a sovereign's frown ;  
 He shall not blush reciting it  
 Before the maid of Cecrops' Town.

III

*A NEARER GOD*

AFAR from Ister's subject tide  
 That laves his Dacian home,  
 The envoy Degis dwells beside  
 The royal stream of Rome ;  
 The guardian of the world he saw,  
 Then turned he wondering,  
 Inspired with joy and raptured awe,  
 And hailed his absent king—  
 ' Brother, the fates have favoured me,  
 Born 'neath a happy star ;  
 For close at hand the God I see  
 You worship from afar.'



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## IV

### *THE DISGUISE*

THE fumes of over-frequent cups to hide  
With scented bay her wine is qualified,  
For simple water suits not Myrtale ;  
But when full veins and staggering gait you see,  
You need not say, by outward signs misled,  
'She looks on Bacchus' wine when it is red.'  
'Tis just as true and more polite to say,  
'Our lady friend doth love Apollo's bay.'

## V

### *TO SEXTUS, KEEPER OF THE PALATINE LIBRARY*

'Tis yours to worship at Minerva's shrine,  
And yours to share a Caesar's thought divine,  
To read his secret soul and watch the birth  
Of cares that move the guardian of the earth.  
I pray you find a corner for my work,  
Where Pedo, Marsus, and Catullus lurk ;  
No book, save it be Virgil's, dares to stand  
Beside the epic of the Master hand.

## VI

### *THE AUTHOR'S PETITION*

ONE easy favour grant, ye heavenly nine,  
Say to Parthenius—is he not your friend?—  
'Thine be long life with happy age, and thine,  
While Caesar still doth reign, a happy end ;  
And thou shalt live by envy unmaligned ;  
Right soon thy babe shall know his father's worth,  
If for this modest book a place thou find  
Within the holiest chamber on the earth.  
Thou know'st when, 'mid the labours of a throne  
Our Jove doth pause to rest him of his task,  
And beams with kindly glances all his own  
To grant the boons that lowly suppliants ask.

Fear not this little client to protect ;  
 Who comes in cedar and in purple dressed  
 In seemly wise, with ebon bosses decked,  
 Shall never make an insolent request.  
 Hold back the purple book and make no sign  
 That thou hast aught to proffer or submit.'  
 But if I know your lord, ye heavenly nine,  
 He needs no prompting, but shall ask for it.

## VII

*THE NEW ROME*

THE Phoenix from the flaming pyre  
 Renewed to life appears,  
 Sprung from the ashes of a sire  
 Who lived a thousand years.

Reflecting Caesar's grace to-day,  
 To youth and life reborn,  
 Our Rome renewed doth put away  
 Her aspect old and worn.

O God of fire, thy wrongs forget,  
 Thine ancient wrath eschew,  
 The folk of Mars are we, and yet  
 Sweet Venus' children too.

Spare us, our father, so may she  
 Forgive the Lemnian bond,  
 Content henceforth to dwell with thee  
 A loyal spouse and fond.

## \* VIII

*AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE*

OUR master's edict and divine command,  
 Whereby the theatre-seats in order stand  
 And his due place is given to each knight,  
 Phasis was praising clad in purple bright.  
 With swelling pride he puffed and loudly said—  
 ' Now to us knights our proper honour's paid.  
 At length to sit at ease we are allowed,  
 Not soiled nor elbowed by the greasy crowd.'

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

He would perhaps have made a long oration,  
Elated by his novel situation ;  
But Lëitus his periods put to rout,  
And to his purple mantle said—' Get out.'

## IX

### *THE MASTER-PHYSICIAN*

I WAS out of sorts—not like to die—  
Till swift to my bedside flew  
Symmachus, fever's best ally,  
And a hundred pupils too ;  
A hundred hands with the north-wind chill  
Pawed me, until I vow  
That, though till he came I was not ill,  
I shiver with ague now.

## X

### *TO REGULUS*

' FAME comes not to the living. Strange ! ' you say,  
' How few can love the artists of their day ! '  
The cause is this, that envy's cross-eyed view  
Will always set the old above the new.  
Thus haunt we Pompey's ancient porch—and thus  
Fools praise the crumbled fanes of Catulus.  
So Virgil's Rome pored still o'er Ennius' page,  
And Homer lived unhonoured of his age ;  
Few were his peers to laud Menander's plays ;  
Who save Corinna knew her Ovid's lays ?  
Yet soft, my books, no haste, nor hurry fate ;  
If fame must wait on death, then let it wait.

## XI

### *TO THE POET STELLA*

THAT diamond, emerald, and sard  
Adorn my Stella's hand,  
That jaspers bright should deck the bard  
I well can understand.

For as he set a lovely lay  
 With jewels bright and rare,  
 A few escaped, and these are they  
 That now his hand doth wear.

## XII

*TO THE SAME*

THOUGH Masclion lifts a monstrous tree  
 And struts about quite gaily,  
 'Tis nothing to the feat I see  
 My Stella doing daily.

Can Ninus lift six boys or eight  
 When all his might he uses ?  
 Why, Stella's finger bears the weight  
 Of Pallas and the Muses !

## XIII

*TO CALLISTRATUS*

THOUGH I am poor and always have been so,  
 A Knight am I and honour can I claim.  
 Men say, ' 'Tis Martial ' wheresoever I go,  
 Few, after death, have won so great a name.  
 Upon your pillared palace hangs your fame.  
 Your coffers—since your master made you free—  
 Have bulged with growing wealth ; you hold in fee  
 Half Egypt, own vast flocks in Gaul afar.  
 Yet what I am that you can never be,  
 While any clown might well be what you are.

## \* XIV

*A THEATRE INCIDENT*

NANNEIUS was wont in the days long ago  
 To capture a place in the very front row ;  
 But now they won't let him, and so yesterday  
 When he'd moved once or twice, he devised a new way.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

He covered his face with his cloak, save one eye  
Wherewith he contrived at the players to spy ;  
And wishing to make the best of a bad job  
Crouched down 'twixt the seats just behind Hob and Nob.  
Ejected from here, to the end of a seat  
That faced on the gangway, he beat a retreat,  
Half-standing, half-squatting, with infinite labour  
To cheat both Lëitus and his next-door neighbour.

### XV

#### *THE AUTHOR'S REWARD*

'Tis my fifth book of merry verse,  
Yet no man has protested,  
Or said he is one whit the worse,  
So gently I have jested.

But many a reader finds his name  
Is honoured in my pages,  
And these rejoice to know their fame  
Will last throughout the ages.

' Such tributes all are profitless,  
For no one will requite them '—  
They bring no money, I confess,  
And yet I love to write them.

### XVI

#### *A FRIENDLY HINT*

You understand the quips, the gay retort,  
And I pervert my Muse to make you sport,  
But when you read and quote my verses, pray  
Think of the wealth that might be mine to-day,  
Had I but sold my tongue to plead in court ;  
What client's fees, what gifts I might extort,  
What casks of wine from many a foreign port ;  
But this I lost to frolic in a way  
You understand.

I jest for no reward ; must I exhort  
You further ? Well, was fame the only sort  
Of fee that singers won in Maro's day ?  
' We love your verse and give you praise,' you say.  
That all ? Then I must plead, unless—in short  
You understand ?

## XVII

*A MÉSALLIANCE*

SHE said her traditions had taught her  
 That she as a nobleman's daughter  
     Couldn't marry a Knight,  
     Tho' a Baron she might,  
 And then she eloped with a porter.

## XVIII

*TO QUINTIANUS*

'Tis the season when we send  
 Little gifts from friend to friend,  
 Tablets, kerchiefs without end,  
     Slender spoons ;  
 Tapers too are popular,  
 And from Syrian lands afar,  
 You may get a narrow jar  
     Full of prunes.

Do I seem to you unkind ?  
 Do I show a stingy mind  
 If my offering is confined  
     To my book ?  
 Nay, let others calculate ;  
 'Tis an artifice I hate  
 When a present is a bait  
     On a hook ?

When the char with greedy eye  
 Sees the lure go floating by,  
 He is taken by the fly,  
     And it's plain  
 If I do not give at all  
 To the rich, my purse is small,  
 So 'tis truly liberal  
     To abstain.

## \* XIX

*TO DOMITIAN*

IF we may trust the truth, this age of thine,  
 Great sire, in fame doth all the past outshine.  
 When could we look on triumphs better gained ?  
 When have the gods more duly thanks obtained ?

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Beneath what chief was Rome so fair to see ?  
Under what prince enjoyed such liberty ?  
One fault there is and grievous, though but one ;  
A poor man gets no thanks for service done.  
Who gives his wealth to old and loyal friends ?  
Who, when you've made him knight, his escort lends ?  
At Saturn's feast to give some silver spoons  
Or yellow toga worth a few half-crowns  
Our millionaires to-day most generous think,  
And never let us hear the sovereigns chink.  
Be thou, great sire, my friend and take their place :  
No virtue more thy majesty could grace.  
Methinks you smile and say with wrinkled nose—  
' For his own profit he advice bestows.'

### XX

#### *TO JULIUS MARTIALIS*

If I might spend  
My hours with you, dear friend,  
Care-free, at ease  
To do what I should please,  
And could dispose  
My leisure as I chose,  
The pomp and state  
Of mansions of the great  
Should we disown,  
And law-courts' dreary drone,  
All wordy strife,  
And pride and show of life.  
To drive or walk,  
To bathe, enjoy a talk,  
Toy with a book  
Within some shady nook  
Or portico  
Where purling waters flow,  
These should comprise  
Our tasks if we were wise.  
To you and me  
Life is not full ; we see  
The good days fly  
And, ah, how grievously  
Their sum doth mount,  
Set all to our account ;  
Why dally we  
Who know what life should be ?

## XXI

*PELMANISM*

No name of old could he recall,  
 But always mixed them thus,  
 A Mr. Gross was Mr. Small,  
 And Quintus Decimus ;

But now his greetings are correct,  
 Each name he rightly quotes ;  
 How much can care and toil effect,  
 He learned them from his notes !

## \* XXII

*TO PAULUS*

IF I did not this morning deserve your ' good day,'  
 May your Esquiline house be still further away.  
 But I by the Tiburtine column reside,  
 Where the temple of Flora has Jove by its side,  
 And thence from Suburra the steep hill I climb,  
 The path dirty stones and all reeking with grime,  
 Where it's no easy matter to get through a drove  
 Of mules pulling hard as the marble they move,  
 And what is much worse, when at last I have come,  
 Worn out to your house, all I get's—' Not at home.'  
 That is all my reward for a walk in the rain,  
 And it's scarce worth the trouble this journey in vain.  
 You're so busy yourself your friends on you can't wait :  
 So you won't be my patron unless you sleep late.

## XXIII

*THE KNIGHT'S PRIVILEGE*

You sat where'er you chose in raiment coarse,  
 What time the slumbering law you dared to slight ;  
 But now our censor doth that law enforce,  
 And stern Oceanus maintains the right,  
 You flaunt in purple and in scarlet bright.  
 Can that deceive us ? Nay, the chance is small.  
 If clothes could prove the title of a knight,  
 Cordus had won his spurs before us all.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXIV

## *THE PRIDE OF THE RING*

HERMES the Martial darling of our day,  
Hermes well-skilled in every kind of fray,  
Hermes a fighter-teacher, both in one,  
Hermes whom Helius fears and fears alone,  
Hermes before whom Advolans falls mute,  
Hermes himself his only substitute,  
Hermes to whom his frightened pupils bow,  
Hermes who wins nor needs to strike a blow,  
Hermes from whom the theatre wealth derives,  
Hermes the bane of gladiators' wives,  
Hermes the joy of lady-connoisseurs,  
Hermes whose spear the victory ensures,  
Hermes terrific with his drooping crest,  
Hermes whose trident lays the foe to rest,  
Hermes who does each kind of fighting grace,  
Hermes in all unique, the triple ace.

\* XXV

## *THE EQUESTRIAN CENSUS*

You've not got three thousand, my friend, so make haste ;  
Lëitus is coming, you've no time to waste.  
Up quick, run away : or perhaps some kind friend  
To you of his superabundance will lend.  
Whom now shall I put on the record of glory,  
So that after his death men may still read his story ?  
Would not this be true virtue and far better done  
Than to make all the theatre with red saffron run.  
Or to give the three thousand to some senseless gee  
That Scopus his nose all of gold we may see ?  
Dissemblers of friendship ! Your wealth you won't use,  
Though you read this and praise it. What glory you lose !

XXVI

## *CLASSES*

' A DANDY patron, quality A1,'  
'Tis true I called you so ; 'twas only fun.  
But if you think that I insulted you,  
Call me ' a seedy client, class B2.'

## XXVII

*THE INTRUDER*

YOUR culture, manners, birth, and wit  
 Are worthy knighthood, I admit ;  
 But, seeing you have not our rights,  
 Why choose the benches of the knights ?  
 Is it worth while to blench with fear  
 Whene'er you see the usher near ?

## XXVIII

*ENVY*

WHATEVER you may be or do  
 Evil he thinks and speaks of you ;  
 'Twere nothing tho' you soared above  
 The Curii in filial love ;  
 Though yours were Nerva's gentle mind,  
 As Macer's just, as Ruso's kind,  
 As Junius upright, with the wit  
 Of Paulus added on to it,  
 And Regulus' persuasive skill,  
 His envious fangs would gnaw you still.  
 Is that the sort of man you call  
 A common peril to us all ?  
 Nay, who belittles all men thus  
 Can only hurt himself, not us.

## XXIX

*' THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING '*

WHENE'ER you send a hare, my friend,  
 You quote the saw anew,  
 ' Who eats a hare must needs be fair  
 At least a day or two ' ;  
 And yet in sooth if that be truth,  
 Not merely wanton fun,  
 'Tis very clear that you, my dear,  
 Have never eaten one.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXX

## *TO VARRO WITH HIS BOOK*

ALTHOUGH with Sophocles thou share the bays,  
Though matchless be thy touch on Roman lyre,  
Away with work, nor read Catullus' plays,  
Awhile bid trim-tressed Elegy retire ;  
I send my verse to cheer thee at the fire  
A comrade meet at Saturn's festival,  
Unless thou deem the season doth require  
But merry games nor any book at all.

\* XXXI

## *THE ACROBATS*

SEE how they leap, the acrobatic crowd,  
And how the placid bull accepts the load.  
One clasps his horns, one on his broad back stands  
Brandishing shield and sword with careless hands.  
The fierce beast stays unmoved, nor could the plain  
Give surer foothold or more firm remain.  
The boys have naught to fear : the bull indeed  
Himself is more concerned they should succeed.

XXXII

## *THE SPENDTHRIFT'S ESTATE*

HE didn't leave his wife a sou—why not ?  
He had but one and that he still has got.

\* XXXIII

## *THE CRITIC*

A CERTAIN young lawyer, I hear people say,  
Runs down my poor books in the most scornful way.  
I don't know the name of this legal top-sawyer,  
But when I find out—heaven help you, young lawyer !

## XXXIV

*FOR EROTION'S GRAVE*

THOU Mother dear and thou my Father's shade,  
 To you I now commit the gentle maid,  
     Erotion, my little love, my sweet ;  
 Let not her shuddering spirit fear to meet  
 The ghosts, but soothe her lest she be afraid.  
 How should a baby heart be undismayed  
 To pass the lair where Cerberus is laid ?  
 The little six-year maiden gently greet.  
 Dear reverend spirits, give her kindly aid  
 And let her play in some Elysian glade,  
     Lispings my name sometimes—and I entreat  
 Lie softly on her, kindly earth ; her feet,  
 Such tiny feet, on thee were lightly laid.

## \* XXXV

*THE PROUD PORTER*

WHEN Lëitus came up to our rich high-born knight,  
 And said—' Now get out ; to that seat you've no right '—  
 Euclides in scarlet did loudly declare  
 That his farms brought him in sixteen hundred a year  
 At Patrae, and from his Corinthian land  
 A still larger revenue he could command.  
 But as he was drawing a long pedigree  
 From Leda, there fell from his pocket—a key.  
 It was really most awkward to be so betrayed,  
 For every one knew now our boasting friend's trade.

## XXXVI

*INGRATITUDE*

I PRAISED him in a book of mine ;  
 He feigns he does not know it ;  
 That ignorance is but the sign  
 He means to cheat the poet.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXXVII

## *EROTION*

A CHILD more sweet-voiced than a swan full-grown,  
Softer than all Galaesus' lamb's-wool down,  
More dainty than the shells from Lucrine meres,  
More fair than new-cut ivory appears,  
Or Red Sea stones, or snow, or lilies white,  
Whose locks than Baetic fleeces shine more bright  
And could the dormouse and Rhine's knots surpass,  
Whose breath than Paestan roses sweeter was,  
Or Attic honey, or an amber ball  
Snatched from a maiden's hand and warm withal,  
Compared with whom a peacock's hues were pale,  
Squirrels seemed clumsy, and a phoenix stale—  
My little love-bird, my Erotion,  
Lies in the pyre still warm ; her life is done ;  
Six winters had not passed above her head  
When fate relentless struck my playmate dead.

And yet friend Paetus bids me not to grieve—  
' My wife,' he cries, ' is buried, but I live.  
And she was rich and proud, of lineage brave.  
Why weep so sorely for a little slave ? '  
And therewithal, to show his heartfelt pain,  
He beats his breast and tears his hair again.  
How brave is Paetus. He endures his life :  
And yet he's got a fortune from his wife.

XXXVIII

## *A LESSON FROM MYTHOLOGY*

You claim a knighthood ? True, your purse might bear it,  
But then you have a brother who must share it ;  
To halve your paltry means were foolish, very,  
Who takes two bites at such a paltry cherry ?  
One horse for both won't do—the scheme's a mad one.  
Plague on your brother ! Had you never had one,  
You might be Castor ; Pollux makes the trouble,  
For though you count as one, you can't sit double ;  
To say ' unus sedemus ' makes one stammer,  
It isn't common sense—or even grammar.  
Follow the plan of Leda's sons—your brother  
Might be a knight one day and you another.

## XXXIX

*DISAPPOINTED HOPES*

FULL thirty times this year you've signed a will,  
 And every time I send you dainties rare  
 With scented honey fresh from Hybla's hill ;  
 I can't go on—my purse and feelings spare !  
 To make so many wills is hardly fair :  
 Do it for good and all, and then fulfil  
 The promise of that guileful cough that still  
 Deludes all hope. Now is my pocket bare,  
 And common gifts, if oft repeated thus,  
 Would turn a Dives to a Lazarus.

\* XL

*TO ARTEMIDORUS*

MINERVA's the goddess of painters, but yet  
 On limning Queen Venus your fancy is set.  
 Minerva and Venus are rivals, men tell ;  
 So be not surprised if your picture don't sell.

\* XLI

*TO DIDYMUS*

THE softest of eunuch's more manly than you,  
 Or Atys himself whom the castrated crew  
 Proclaim at Celaenae as lord of their rout  
 While they worship the Mother with maddening shout :  
 And yet of the seats in the theatre you prate,  
 Of edicts and stripes, Ides and clasps, and estate ;  
 And point at us poor men the finger of scorn  
 Which with pumice-stone rubbings you love to adorn.  
 It may be perhaps you can sit as a knight ;  
 But to sit with the husbands you've surely no right.

XLII

*TRUE WEALTH*

SOME thief may steal your wealth away,  
 Although by massive walls surrounded ;  
 Or ruthless fire in ashes lay  
 The ancient home your fathers founded ;

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A debtor may withhold your dues,  
Deny perhaps a debt is owing,  
Or sullen ploughlands may refuse  
To yield a harvest to your sowing.

A cunning trollop of the town  
May make your agent rob his master,  
Or waters of the ocean drown  
Your goods and ship in one disaster.

But give to friends whate'er you may,  
'Tis safe from fortune's worst endeavour :  
The riches that you give away,  
These only shall be yours for ever.

\* XLIII

### *THE CHANGE*

MOLL's teeth are black, while Susan's white have grown.  
The reason. Sue's are bought, but Moll's her own.

XLIV

### *THE PARASITE*

DENTO, what means this sudden change ?  
Four times of late—'tis passing strange—  
You have refused to dine ; to-day  
I followed and you rushed away  
From me whom once you tried to meet  
In bath, in theatre, or street.  
The reason I can well divine,  
You've found a richer board than mine,  
And dogs like you will always creep  
Towards the fattest midden heap ;  
But soon your host, beyond a doubt,  
Will find you—aye and kick you out :  
Then you will fawn in currish wise  
For scraps of what you now despise.

XLV

### *TO BASSA*

You say that you are fair, of spotless fame :  
Bassa, to state is not to prove a claim.

## \* XLVI

*TO DIADUMENUS*

I DO not care for kisses,  
 Save when we battle wage ;  
 For me the greatest bliss is  
 To see you burn with rage.  
 I strike, then fondle : so, my dear,  
 I neither have your love nor fear.

## XLVII

*SHORT COMMONS*

HE never dines at home ? 'tis true no doubt—  
 Unless he's given a meal he goes without.

## \* XLVIII

*THE VOW*

WHAT will Love not compel ! Though Pudens murmured  
 'No,'  
 Yet he did not prevent young Encolpos, and so  
 He cut off his hair, while his master wept sore  
 And complained, like Apollo and Phaethon of yore ;  
 Than Hylas more fair or Achilles, when he  
 Rejoiced from his mother's love-locks to be free ;  
 In return for the gift may he beardless remain,  
 And though his hair's short seem a boy once again.

## XLIX

*TO LABIENUS*

You sat alone, yet I declare  
 I thought I saw three people there,  
 It was your head deceived me quite,  
 Somehow I could not count it right,  
 For it was decked on either side  
 With locks a boy might own with pride,  
 But there's a vast expanse between  
 Where not a single hair is seen.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A fine arrangement as you found,  
When Caesar's festal gifts went round ;  
You got three baskets I am told.  
Methinks that Geryon of old  
Looked just like you—pray do not go  
Too near Philippus' portico ;  
If Hercules should see your head,  
All's over, you're as good as dead.

## L

### *THE IMPORTUNATE GUEST*

WHENE'ER I dine at home I know that you  
Will surely take offence if not invited ;  
I verily believe you'd run me through  
Did you perceive my kitchen fire was lighted ;  
Pray let me off this once, this once eschew  
Your greed, 'tis truly dreadful when excited ;  
No longer at my kitchen chimney spy,  
But let my cook elude your eagle eye.

## \* LI

### *THE SURLY ADVOCATE*

THAT fellow who holds all those books in his hand,  
Surrounded by clerks in a chattering band,  
Who at every long brief and full note-book looks dully,  
A Cato forsooth or a Brutus or Tully ;  
Though you tortured him hard you could not make him speak,  
Or give you ' good morning ' in Latin or Greek.  
Do you think that with truth I am rather too free ?—  
Well, let's go and greet him, and then you will see.

## LII

### *SELF-PRAISE*

CAN I forget your many favours ? Nay.  
Why don't I mention them ? Because you do.  
If I begin, some one is sure to say  
' Your patron told me all he did for you ' ;  
Friend there are tasks cannot be done by two ;  
Shall this be yours or mine ? for I submit  
However great a gift, there nothing due  
To any giver who shall boast of it.

LIII

*TO BASSUS*

FOR Pelops or Andromache  
 Your style is quite unsuited,  
 Your ' Colchian Queen ' and ' Niobe '   
 Are tragedy diluted.

You ought to find Deucalion  
 A subject sympathetic,  
 Or is not fire-doomed Phaethon  
 Still apter—and prophetic ?

LIV

*A FEAT OF MEMORY*

HE spoke your name without his note-book's aid,  
 The first impromptu speech he ever made !

\* LV

*A 'DIALOGUE*

WHOM dost thou carry, queen of birds ? 'Tis Jove.  
 Why does he grasp no lightning ? He's in love.  
 With whom ? A boy. And why with visage meek  
 Dost thou look back ? Of Ganymede I speak.

LVI

*A PRACTICAL EDUCATION*

LONG have you pondered what employ  
 Or training you should give your boy ;  
 Firstly, a cultured education  
 To-day is reckoned sheer damnation ;  
 All classic authors are a curse,  
 Bacon is ruin, Milton worse,  
 If he loves rhyme, he must forgo it,  
 Good Lord ! he might become a poet !  
 If art be naught and money all—  
 Why, train him for the Music Hall,  
 Or if he's dull of intellect  
 Make him a tout or architect.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LVII

## *A SLIP OF THE TONGUE*

THOUGH I called you 'My lord,' you've no reason for pride :  
For so to your slaves I have often replied.

\* LVIII

## *TO POSTUMUS*

'To-morrow, to-morrow I mean to start living'—  
So you say, but to-morrow's some time in arriving.  
Where is your 'to-morrow,' where can it be found,  
In Armenia or Parthia or hid underground?  
It's as ancient as Priam or Nestor of old.  
How much would it fetch if you wanted it sold?  
'To-morrow':—nay, do not this moment delay.  
The wise man is he who has lived yesterday.

LIX

## *TO STELLA*

DEAR poet friend, desirous to befriend you  
It is not gold or silver that I send you,  
For costly gifts demand a costly guerdon ;  
My pretty gift shall free you from a burden.

\* LX

## *TO A JEALOUS RIVAL*

You may bark at me always and snarl and attack,  
But I mean to deny you the fame that you lack ;  
And I do not intend that your name should be read  
In my books and thereby through the wide world be spread.  
Why you should be heard of? There's no reason why ;  
Unknown you have lived and unknown you may die.  
One or two men in Rome, or perhaps three or four,  
Will play 'dog bite dog,' if it is in their power ;  
But I, let me tell you, am not one of these,  
And my nails I shall keep off your scabs, if you please.

## \* LXI

*TO MARIANUS*

WHO is the young fopling, who is he, I say,  
 Whom we see with your wife at her side all the day.  
 Who whispers soft nothings into her warm ear  
 And presses his elbow so dangerously near,  
 While on every finger a light ring he shows  
 And never a hair on his smooth legs allows.  
 Can't you give me an answer? What's that?—'For my  
     wife  
 He's agent,'—A trusted one too, on my life.  
 He looks well the part of an agent, does he :  
 Aufidius the rake would not more earnest be.  
 My dear Marianus, we'll see you both soon  
 On the stage : he'll be clown and you old pantaloon.  
 'Your wife's business man'—A young fopling like that !  
 It's your business, my friend, not your wife's, that he's at.

## LXII

*AN INVITATION*

A WELCOME to my garden, if you care  
 To sit upon the ground, for seats are lacking ;  
 Or bring, good guest, a table and a chair ;  
 These have resigned, they stand awry and cracking ;  
 There is not e'en a cushion-cover there,  
 The couch has broken ties and rotten sacking.  
 I bought the gardens—you can beautify them  
 'Twill cost you less than what I paid to buy them.

## LXIII

*TO PONTICUS*

YOU'RE always saying, 'Marcus, as a friend,  
 Tell me about my books and how they strike you' ;  
 'Quite wonderful, unique—I dare contend  
 That Regulus has written nothing like you.'  
 'Kind friend,' you say, 'May Jove and Caesar too  
 Treat you as you deserve !' 'The same to you.'



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXIV

### *CARPE DIEM*

SLAVE, a full draught of vintage fine,  
And bid thy comrade cool the wine,  
Let snow its heat allay ;  
Twine rosy wreaths to deck my head,  
Nard shall its precious fragrance shed  
To crown my locks to-day ;  
For Caesar's tomb that standeth nigh  
Doth warn that even gods can die,  
I'll live while yet I may.

## \* LXV

### *TO DOMITIAN*

THE Nemean lion and Arcadian boar,  
In spite of Juno, gave the stars of yore  
To great Alcides who laid Eryx low,  
And forced the Libyan wrestler to bow  
Before his might, and slew the woodland pest,  
Cacus, of stolen kine by craft possessed.  
And yet how small to-day his deeds appear.  
Each morn we see more glorious conflicts here.  
How many boars by Caesar now are slain  
And beasts more fierce than that of Nemea's plain  
How soon would Geryon admit defeat  
If he our famous champion should meet !  
And how could Hydra with each head renewed  
For all her fury face the Nile's fierce brood !  
He by his valour swiftly rose to heaven :  
To thee, great Emperor, may it late be given.

## \* LXVI

### *TO PONTILIANUS*

THOUGH I often to you a ' Good morning ' have said,  
You ne'er answer back, any more than the dead.  
The next time 'twill be, if you do not reply,—  
' Good-bye, dear departed, for ever good-bye.'

## LXVII

*A TARDY NEMESIS*

WHEN swallows sought a sunnier clime,  
 One laggard tarried, and the rest  
 Returned again in summer-time  
 And found the traitress in her nest ;  
 So was her guilty deed confessed,  
 And she was slain, for tardy fate  
 In her an ancient wrong redressed ;  
 But Itys was avenged too late.

## LXVIII

*TO LESBIA*

I SEND you tresses from the North ; behold  
 How far more lustrous is your braided gold.

## \* LXIX

*THE DEATH OF CICERO*

ANTONY, more guilty than Pothinus' knife,  
 Whose lists of death weigh less than Tully's life,  
 Why draw the sword against the mouth of Rome ?  
 Not Cataline himself to this had come.  
 To your base soldiers murder was a trade,  
 And for that tongue a golden fee you paid.  
 You hushed that sacred voice in senseless hate :  
 Now the whole world is Cicero's advocate.

## \* LXX

*TO MAXIMUS*

SYRISCUS a full hundred thousand received  
 From his patron, and though it will scarce be believed,  
 He managed at taverns to squander the lot  
 About the four baths, drinking pot after pot.  
 What a thirst he must have such a fortune to drown,  
 And to do it too standing without sitting down.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXI

## *A SUMMER HOLIDAY*

To Trebula thy footsteps turn,  
For here be valleys cool and deep ;  
Hot though the stars of Cancer burn  
Her pleasant fields their verdure keep ;

And Aeolus right well doth know  
My little farm and country cot,  
He sends his gentle breeze to blow  
That ardent Leo parch them not.

Come, for the uplands call : with me  
Pass the long days of harvest heat ;  
Compared with these, cool Tivoli  
Shall seem a winter's warm retreat.

\* LXXII

## *TO RUFUS*

' THE mother of Bacchus was Jove '—it were rather  
More proper to say—' Semele was his father.'

LXXIII

## *RETURN FAVOURS*

WHY don't I send my book to you  
Although you often urge me to ?  
The reason's good, for if I did  
You'd send me yours—which God forbid !

LXXIV

## *ON THE DEATH OF POMPEY AND HIS SONS*

ASIA has Sextus', Europe Gnaeus' grave,  
Their sire doth lie beneath the Libyan wave,  
Or haply on her strand, we wot not where :  
What marvel every continent should share  
Their sundered ashes ? One could not embrace  
The mighty ruin of that mighty race.

## LXXV

*A NOVEL UNION*

SINCE legal penalties you held in awe  
 You married Laelia ; she's your wife-in-law !

## LXXVI

*THE MITHRIDATIC CURE*

BY drinking poison daily, soon  
 Did Pontus' King become immune,  
 So, judging by your daily dinner,  
 You'll soon be hunger-proof, my Cinna.

## \* LXXVII

*TO MARULLUS*

A WIT once remarked—' When his patron is near,  
 You'd think that Marullus had oil in his ear.'

## LXXVIII

*A COUNTRY MENU*

TORANIUS come and dine (or fast) with me,  
 If you should find your lonely table bore you ;  
 Have you a jaded palate ? there shall be  
 No lack of leeks or lettuce to restore you ;  
 Sliced tunny with its egg—fresh broccoli  
 On a black plate my slave shall set before you,  
 This from my garden cool—but touch it not  
 With careless fingers, 'twill be piping hot.

A sausage on polenta snowy white,  
 Plump lentils duly flanked with streaky bacon ;  
 Then if dessert can stir your appetite,  
 Raisins and Syrian pears shall next be taken,  
 Chestnuts from learned Naples, cooked aright  
 In slowest heat their savour to awaken,  
 And from my humble wine-jar do not shrink,  
 The better seems the wine the more you drink.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And then, these dainties done, if Bacchus please  
To stir new craving, I can satisfy it  
With fine, fat olives from Picenum's trees,  
Or lupins, or parched peas. I don't deny it  
Is a poor dinner ; yet to lie at ease  
Nor need to hear small gossip, or supply it,  
Is something gained : and here you need not wear  
The jaded diner's artificial air.

I'll read no heavy tome when dinner's done,  
Nor strive by any dancer's aid to quell you,  
Those Spanish jades are minxes, every one,  
Their artful attitudes would but repel you,  
But Condylus shall pipe—and there is none  
More skilled than he—perhaps I ought to tell you  
That you'll sit next the lady you adore.  
Whom shall we ask to make a cosy four ?

\* LXXIX

*TO ZOILUS*

FROM the table eleven times you must get up  
And appear in eleven fresh gowns while we sup ;  
For you fear, I suppose, that a draught while you sweat  
Will give you a cold if your clothes should be wet :  
Why do I by your side suffer no such distress ?  
Well, it's cooling perhaps to have only one dress.

\* LXXX

*TO SEVERUS*

I BEG you give me of your treasure,  
Part of an hour when you're at leisure,  
And while you read these trifles light  
A debit in your ledger write.  
' 'Tis hard my holiday to spoil '  
Nay, prithee friend, endure the toil.  
For if Secundus too will read  
This little booklet, then indeed—  
—I hope I don't presume too much—  
'Twill owe it to your critic touch  
That I, like Sisyphus in pain,  
Shall not find all my trouble vain,

To you indebted more than me  
 And free from all anxiety,  
 When yours and wise Secundus' file  
 Has chastened its defects of style.

LXXXI

*LIKE TO LIKE*

GOLD only draws to gold, so it is plain,  
 If you are poor, that poor you will remain.

\* LXXXII

*TO GAURUS*

WHY yesterday promise two thousand, my friend,  
 When to-day you can't even a bare hundred lend?  
 ' You can, but you won't '—that's the worst cut of all.  
 You're a paltry curmudgeon ; and damn you withal.

LXXXIII

*THE OLD STORY*

FOLLOW, and I shall flee,  
 Fly, I shall follow thee ;  
     Such is the bent  
 Of love's perversity ;  
 Denial draweth me,  
     But not assent.

LXXXIV

*TO GALLA*

RELUCTANT urchins leave their play  
     Their clamorous pedagogue to face,  
 And rattling dice-boxes betray  
     The fevered gambler's lurking place,  
     Haled from his lair in sorry case,  
 For now the feast its course has run,  
     Abject he seeks the aedile's grace,  
 The Saturnalia are done.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Yes, done, but I have had from you  
No little gift my heart to cheer,  
You never sent me much, 'tis true ;  
But nothing came this barren year ;  
Ah well, your feast will soon be here,  
March brings my opportunity,  
Then I'll return to you, my dear,  
The compliment you've paid to me.

BOOK SIX





## I

*TO JULIUS MARTIALIS*

TAKE this my book, dear critic sage,  
 For if thou purge its faults away,  
 It scarce shall tremble in the day  
 When Caesar's hand shall turn its page.

## \* II

*ON DOMITIAN'S REVIVAL OF THE LEX JULIA*

ONCE 'twas a sport to break the marriage vow  
 And gelding was a pastime : not so now.  
 Both thou forbiddest, Caesar ; and hereby  
 Hast rid from shame unborn posterity.  
 No eunuchs, no adulterers, we see  
 Here, where e'en eunuchs once with wives made free.

## \* III

*ON THE EXPECTED BIRTH OF DOMITIAN'S HEIR*

BE born, thou name to Iulus promised long,  
 Be born, true scion of the heavenly throng ;  
 With snow-white fingers Julia shall take  
 The golden fleece and thence thy life-threads make.  
 But pass the ages ere thy sire resign  
 The reins and join his elder power with thine.

## IV

*ON DOMITIAN'S MORAL REFORMS*

THOU prince of princes, our most puissant lord,  
 What triumphs does thy city owe to thee !  
 Temples new-built, crumbling fanes restored,  
 What holy rites, what gorgeous pageantry,  
 What cities won !—Yet hast thou given to Rome  
 A greater boon—her purity of home.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## V

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

AT vast expense I bought my farm and grounds ;  
Can you oblige me with a thousand pounds ?  
That silence means I may not pay—'tis true,  
And that is why I stooped to beg of you.

## VI

### *THE SUPERNUMERARY*

IN Comedy are actors three, no more,  
And though on Paula's stage are gallants four,  
She does not violate the rules of Art,  
For one of these has not a speaking part.

## VII

### *EASY BONDS*

SOME thirty days ago not more, we saw  
Enacted once again the Julian law  
And outward decency restored : since then  
Has Telesilla married husbands ten !  
This oft-played farce is ' marriage ' ! I confess  
A demi-mondaine would offend me less.

## VIII

### *A PRUDENT FATHER*

OF praetors two and of tribunes four,  
Of pleaders and poets half a score,  
All asked for a sage's girl to wife.  
He sought to give her an easy life,  
So he made a prudent if hasty plan,  
And married her off to a broker's man.

## \* IX

### *THE SLEEPING SPECTATOR*

AT the theatre in slumber your eyelids you close  
And grumble when Ocean disturbs your repose.

## \* X

*THE GIFT DEFERRED*

FOR some few thousands Jupiter I prayed—  
 ' Who gave me temples, he will give '—he said.  
 Temples he gave to Jupiter : to me  
 Naught did he give. I sinned through modesty  
 And asked too little. Yet my humble screed  
 With what a gentle visage did he read.  
 So looked he when he crowns to Dacians sent  
 Or down the Sacred Way in triumph went.  
 Tell me, O maid, who dost his secrets know,  
 How says he ' yes,' when thus he answers ' no ' ?—  
 Thus I ; and thus, her Gorgon laid aside,  
 Pallas—' A gift deferred is not denied.'

## XI

*THE FRIENDLY LEAD*

' Is friendship dead ? ' you sigh, ' in days like these  
 Orestes cannot find a Pylades.'  
 Think you Orestes lived on daintier fare  
 Or quaffed a cup his friend might never share ?  
 Your palate's not more delicate than mine,  
 Yet I get whelks, you oysters plump and fine.  
 Coarse robes I wear, you flaunt in rich attire,  
 Can Gallic fustian love the robes of Tyre ?  
 Such friendship shows in word and not in deed,  
 I can't play Pylades without a lead.

## XII

*BY RIGHT OF PURCHASE*

THOSE purchased tresses which her head adorn  
 Fabulla swears are hers—is she forsworn ?

## XIII

*ON A STATUE OF JULIA, NIECE OF DOMITIAN*

HATH Pheidias' chisel graved that lovely form ?  
 Nay, Pallas' art hath wrought it ; she alone  
 Could make the soulless marble speak and warm  
 With all the grace of life the cold white stone.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And, see, a gentler hand than Venus' own  
Toys with a cestus—Cupid brought it her ;  
Let Juno, yea, or Venus, beg that zone  
To lure the War God or the Thunderer.

## XIV

### *THE SILENT SINGER*

You write no tuneful verse. You say you can,  
But from the proof your modest pen doth shrink.  
You could and will not ! Self-denying man !  
O Milton, guiltless of your country's ink !

## XV

### *ON AN ANT IN AMBER*

THE amber dripped from Phaethon's fair tree  
And whelmed a petty ant that wandered there,  
And, though of little worth in life was she,  
Now in her death she is a treasure rare.

## \* XVI

### *THE ORCHARD KEEPER*

PRIAPUS, who dost these few acres guard,  
With phallus and with sickle keeping ward ;  
Never may hoary thieves these fences break,  
But only boys and girls thy apples take.

## XVII

### *ABBREVIATIONS*

You'RE Cinna now, not Cinnamus,  
O Barber, you are Barbarous,  
In clipping names you err.  
Suppose you shared the honoured name  
Of Furius, would you do the same,  
And crop it down to ' Fur ? '

## \* XVIII

*AN EPITAPH*

IN Spanish soil doth Saloninus rest,  
 Noblest of souls, a spirit ever blest.  
 'Twere wrong to grieve : he still is with us here ;  
 For Priscus lives, to him than life more dear.

## XIX

*THE ELOQUENT ORATOR*

'Tis not a poisoning case obscure,  
 Nor murder, nor assault ;  
 Three goats are stolen, and I'm sure  
 My neighbour is in fault.

The judge has asked for evidence,  
 'Tis all we're waiting for ;  
 But counsel paints with eloquence  
 The Mithradatic war.

He roars of Carthage—perjured land,  
 And Cannae doth discuss,  
 And then applauds with voice and hand  
 The deeds of Marius.

With Sulla's acts he makes us quake,  
 O'er Mucius he gloats ;  
 Now, Postumus, for goodness' sake  
 Say something of the goats.

## \* XX

*PROCRASTINATION*

You said to me—' Can I do nothing for you ? '  
 So I asked for a loan, as a bill had come due.  
 And now for a week it's been doubt and delay.  
 Refuse me at once, don't torment me this way.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXI

### *IANTHIS AND STELLA*

WHEN Venus knit the bond that tied  
Ianthis to her poet,  
'No greater gift is mine,' she cried,  
'On Stella I bestow it.'

So spake she for the bride to hear,  
Anon, her craft betraying,  
She murmured low in Stella's ear,  
'Thou rogue, beware of straying ;

The wanton war-god oft hath known  
The wrath of vengeful Venus,  
Before he was my spouse alone  
When rivals came between us.

Now wedded, none disputes with me  
My sway supreme and royal,  
And Juno well may wish that she  
Could boast a mate as loyal.'

She ceased and gave the blow unseen,  
From which no hearts recover ;  
Now smite alike, O gracious queen,  
The lady and her lover.

## XXII

### *RESPECTABILITY*

Now, a suspected past to cover,  
You make a husband of your lover,  
Lest law should visit your transgression ;  
This is not marriage but confession !

## \* XXIII

### *TO LESBIA*

You want me, dear lady, to be always ready.  
But love, you must know, is a thing most unsteady.  
Your words and your gestures invite me to go  
To extremities with you. Your face—that says 'No.

\* XXIV

*THE SATURNALIA*

You are indeed a reckless lad,  
At Saturn's feast in toga clad!

\* XXV

*LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY*

DEAR Marullinus, noble sire's true son,  
Who 'neath the frozen stars of North hast gone,  
Hear me, thy father's friend, as now I pray,  
And to thy mindful heart this message lay.  
Restrain thy courage, nor with valour rash  
Too swift against the foemen's battle dash.  
Let madmen fly into the furious strife:  
Father and chief alike both need thy life.

XXVI

PERICLITATUR capite Sotades noster.  
Reum putatis esse Sotaden? non est.  
Arrigere desit posse Sotades: lingit.

XXVII

*TO NEPOS*

NEPOS, like me you dwell near Flora's shrine  
In town; your country house is near to mine,  
So well I know you have a daughter who  
—All honour to your dame—is just like you;  
And yet why save your ancient wines for her?  
Hard cash to mellow casks will she prefer;  
Reward her love and leave her stores of gold,  
And if you will, new wine—it will be old  
Before she needs it. May a childless man,  
But not a father, love good Caecuban?



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXVIII

### *ON A BOY'S GRAVE*

BENEATH a marble, by Flaminius' way  
Lies Glaucias, whom Melior made free,  
For well he loved him in his little day ;  
All knew his fame and mourned his fate—for he  
Was pure in soul and modest, fair to see,  
And rich in every dower of heart and head,  
Yet only twelve full summers he had known  
And, ere the next was done, the child was dead.  
Hast thou a tear to drop above the stone ?  
Be that the last that ever thou shalt shed.

## XXIX

### *ON THE SAME*

No common household serf, no purchased slave,  
But worthy Melior's pure love was he,  
Long ere he knew the boon his patron gave  
In just reward, already he was free,  
For who so good and dear, so fair to see,  
Dowered with a beauty that a God might wear ?  
If aught be priceless, short its life must be ;  
May naught thou lovest be over dear or fair !

## XXX

### *HOPE DEFERRED*

' WHAT, fifty pounds ! ' you said to me,  
' Take it of course—a gift you know.'  
Ah, tenfold more my debt should be  
If deed had followed word—but no,  
You waited month on month, and though  
At last you gave it me, 'tis sad  
That gratitude died long ago,  
And you are fifty to the bad.

\* XXXI

*TO CHARIDEMUS*

YOU know your good lady has got an affair  
 With a doctor, yet at it you wink.  
 You won't need a fever to die with that pair :  
 Toss off what they give you to drink.

\* XXXII

*OTHO AT BEDRIACUM*

SHE wavered yet, the fury of our fray,  
 And wanton Otho still could win the day ;  
 But cursing war with all its price of blood,  
 He pierced his heart and perished as he stood.  
 Let Cato's life than Caesar's greater be :  
 But in their death is Otho first or he ?

\* XXXIII

*TROP D'AMOUR*

YOUNG Nancy was once the most happy of men,  
 But now he's quite weary of life ;  
 Thefts, runaway slaves, fires, mourning and death,  
 And worst thing of all—a fond wife.

XXXIV

*A RECKONING OF KISSES*

GIVE me fond kisses. ' Nay, how many more ? '  
 You ask ? Ah, count the ripples of the seas,  
 The myriad shells that strew the ocean's shore,  
 Fare to Hymettus' hill and tell the bees,  
 What time, unhoped for, Caesar meets her view  
 The plaudits of all Rome, canst reckon these ?  
 What Lesbia gave her bard should not appease  
 My thirst. Who numbers kisses needs but few.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXV

## *ON A LONG-WINDED ORATOR*

So loud you clamoured, the reluctant bench  
Gave you seven hours to speak—a generous tether—  
But still your speech drags on—your throat you drench  
With many a tepid draught—bethink you whether  
You might not drain the extra clock, and quench  
That burning eloquence and thirst together.

XXXVI

MENTULA tam magna est, tantus tibi, Papyle, nasus,  
Ut possis, quotiens arrigis, olfacere.

XXXVII

SECTI podicis usque ad umbilicum  
Nullas reliquias habet Charinus,  
Et prurit tamen usque ad umbilicum.  
O quanta scabie miser laborat !  
Culum non habet, est tamen cinaedus.

XXXVIII

## *ON REGULUS' LITTLE SON*

SEE little Regulus ; he claps his hands  
To hear his sire, not three years old is he,  
Yet quits his mother's lap and proudly stands  
To share the loud applause ; he loves to see  
The bench, the crowding throng, and hails with glee  
The pomp of court and lawyers' busy drone.  
So high-bred colts will long a race to run,  
Bulls lust for battle ere their horns be grown.  
Preserve him, heaven, until, his triumphs won,  
His father see them, and his mother own  
Pride in the sire redoubled in the son.

## \* XXXIX

*A FAMILY MAN*

MARULLA has made you the father of seven,  
 But they are not your children or your neighbour's even.  
 Conceived in slaves' beds or on mats where she lay,  
 Their faces your wife's peccadilloes betray.  
 This curly-haired rascal we see by his look  
 Is a nigger, the offspring of Santra the cook.  
 The next, blubber-lipped, with a flat, crushed-in nose,  
 The wrestler Pannychus' own image shows.  
 The third is blear-eyed and you know who's his maker  
 If you've ever beheld blear-eyed Dama the baker.  
 The fourth is pale-checked, with a catamite's face ;  
 To Lygdus your minion his birth we can trace.  
 The fifth, with sharp head and two long asses' ears,  
 Is the son of your fool Cyrta, so it appears.  
 Last of all the two sisters, one dark-haired, one red,  
 From your bailiff and Crotus the flautist were bred,  
 While your Niobid troupe would have been at least ten  
 Had Coressus and Dindymus only been men.

## XL

*THE GRAMMAR OF LOVE*

As Glycera was perfect, so  
 Lycoris is to me,  
 How can the past be present, tho'  
 Their futures may agree ?  
 ' Love,' ' Loved,' ah, Time's omnipotence !  
 His grammar rules are crude ;  
 By merely altering a tense  
 He brings a change of mood.

## XLI

*THE POET WITH A COLD*

A WRAP, because his voice is weak,  
 About his throat is flung ;  
 So he admits he cannot speak  
 And will not hold his tongue.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLII

## *THE PERFECT BATH*

IF you never have bathed with Etruscus, my friend,  
Then you'll die still unbathed when you come to your end.  
No waters are quite so alluring, you'll own :  
Not the founts of Aponus to maidens unknown,  
Or soft Sinuessa, or Passer's hot stream,  
Proud Anxur, or Phoebus, or Baiae supreme.  
Nowhere so serene is the light the sun pours,  
Nowhere does the day last for so many hours.  
Green slabs from Taygetus and African stone  
Contend with the marble in Phrygia hewn,  
While rich alabaster deliciously warm  
Adds its glow to the snake-stone's peculiar charm.  
If you like Spartan methods, first try their dry heat,  
Then a plunge where the Virgo and Marcia meet ;  
For the water's so bright and the stone shines so clear  
You would never suspect any water was there.  
Here, dash it : wake up : listen : don't shut your eye.  
Very well : you will never have bathed when you die.

XLIII

## *A QUIET RETREAT*

'MID luxury in Baiae's sun you bask,  
Fair Naiads call you to their healing pool,  
To me my country cot gives all I ask,  
No burdensome broad acres there I rule.  
Here is my sunshine, here my waters cool,  
My priceless luxury—I went in quest  
Of pleasure once to waters of renown  
What time long travel gave but added zest ;  
But now I hate to journey far from town  
And only seek for comfort and for rest.

XLIV

## *TO CALLIODORUS*

COARSE jokes you think are Attic salt,  
That you are gay and debonair,  
That clownish insults must exalt  
Your reputation everywhere.

But now for naked truth prepare !  
 So vile the venom you call wit,  
 That none your cup will ever share,  
 If once your lips have poisoned it.

## XLV

*THE LEOPARD'S SPOTS*

ENOUGH, you've had your fling, ye wantons gay,  
 Get married now as law ordains—but stay—  
 If Lygdus weds Laetoria, law, methinks,  
 But turns a single to a married minx.

## \* XLVI

*TO THE BLUE CHARIOTEER*

You lash your nags hard ; but they know they're the Blues,  
 And they won't put on pace : 'tis their glory to lose.

## XLVII

*THE POET'S VOW*

GLIDING through Stella's house, thy waters lave  
 Thy lord's fair halls and court, thou nymph divine ;  
 Egeria sent thee forth from Trivia's cave  
 Perchance, or art thou of the heavenly nine ?  
 This victim here I offer at thy shrine,  
 Since, sick, thy healing draught I took by stealth ;  
 Take thou my quittance, nymph, and be it mine  
 Freely to quaff henceforth full draughts of health.

## \* XLVIII

*BOUGHT APPLAUSE*

THE well-dressed spectators shout loudly ' Bravo '—  
 It's a debt to your eloquent dinner they owe.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLIX

## A STATUE OF PRIAPUS

I WAS not from a frail elm hewn,  
And this stark column plainly shown  
Is of no ordinary timber,  
But carved from out a cypress limber  
Which dreads not age's slow decay  
Nor centuries as they pass away.  
Beware then, rascals : if thou wound  
The smallest vine in this my ground,  
My cypress rod will graft on thee  
Figs that as tumours we shall see.

\* L

## THE ROAD TO WEALTH

LAST year Telesinus possessed one poor gown,  
But his comrades as good decent fellows were known.  
To-day he consorts with a villainous crew  
And his lands, plate, and table are matched by but few.  
Honest friends are no use : if you want to be rich,  
You must not be afraid, my dear boy, to touch pitch.

LI

## A REVENGE

I KNOW the way to get revenge on you  
For seldom asking me ; next time you do  
You'll know my wrath. Yes, you may beg and send  
And urge me as you will, but then, my friend—  
'What, what?' you gasp with terror nearly dumb,  
'What shall I do indeed!' well—*I shall come.*

\* LII

## THE BOY BARBER

HERE lies Pantagathus in boyhood dead,  
His master's grief and sorrow, from whose head  
With scissors swift he would the loose hair clip  
And pass his razor over cheek and lip.  
Though thou lie light, kind Earth, upon him, still  
Thou wilt not match the lightness of his skill.

## LIII

*A BAD DREAM*

HE bathed and supped with me—how bright he seemed ;  
 Next morn they found him dead. What fell disease  
 Slew him so suddenly ? Alas, he dreamed  
 That by him stood the quack Hermocrates.

## \* LIV

*THINK BIG*

IF John can't use ' so big ' in either gender,  
 He scarcely can the simplest *précis* render.  
 Why's that, you say ? Well, I myself surmise  
 In either gender John admires size.

## \* LV

*TO A FOP*

You have always perfume on,  
 Cassia or cinnamon,  
 Taken from a phoenix nest  
 Or from barbers' vials pressed ;  
 And at us poor folk you jeer  
 Who must unperfumed appear.  
 Well, I'd rather scentless be  
 Than be scented lavishly.

## LVI

QUOD tibi crura rigent saetis et pectora uillis,  
 Uerba putas famae te, Charideme, dare ?  
 Extirpa, mihi crede, pilos de corpore toto  
 Teque pilare tuas testificare natis.  
 ' Quae ratio est ? ' inquis. Scis multos dicere multa :  
 Fac pedicari te, Charideme, putent.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LVII

### *ON A BALD MAN WHO PAINTED HIS SCALP*

WHEN nature's tresses you would imitate  
By smearing unguents on your greasy pate,  
At least the barber's toil and shears you save—  
A sponge can give a clean and easy shave.

## LVIII

### *TO THE CENTURION PUDENS*

FAR in the North you fought and loved to see  
Gleam bright above your head the frozen wain,  
Nor knew how Lethe's waters threatened me  
And the dim mists that shroud Elysium's plain ;  
Wandered mine eyes to find your face again,  
' Pudens ' : my lips, nigh speechless, murmured still.  
But now if no black thread for me be spun,  
If listening gods mine orisons fulfil,  
Soon shall I see you safe, the guerdon won  
Of high command worthy your fame and skill.

## \* LIX

### *ON BACCARA*

BACCARA has so many great-coats that he grows  
Unless the frost bites and the icy wind howls.  
He likes the dark days and the cold and the snow :  
Mild weather in winter to him is a blow.  
What harm has my cloak, which a light wind can raise  
From my shoulders, done to you that winter you praise ?  
How much more straightforward and kind it would be  
In August to let us your frieze wrappers see !

## LX

### *THE ENVIOUS CRITIC*

ME kindly Rome loves, quotes my books, and buys them ;  
But till that critic feigning to despise them  
Blushed and turned pale, then yawned and looked confounded,  
I never felt my fame was surely grounded.

## LXI

*FAME*

- Martial : Pompullus' end is gained, he will be read  
And over all the world his fame be spread.
- Faustinus : The Tow-haired knaves of Germany, say you,  
Share such repute—and other rebels too !
- Martial : Yet some account him clever you must own.
- Faustinus : Fame cannot follow cleverness alone.  
The moth and worm love many a learned book  
That no one wants to buy except a cook.  
For song needs more than cleverness can give  
And, save through genius, it shall not live.

## LXII

*ON FORTUNE-HUNTERS*

Now he has lost his only son  
And there is no one to protect him ;  
Take him a gift, make haste and run,  
Now he has lost his only son.

By cruel fate is he undone,  
For soon you vultures will detect him,  
Now he has lost his only son  
And there is no one to protect him.

## LXIII

*ON THE SAME*

HE courts you—of the fact you are aware ;  
He is a greedy rogue—you know that too ;  
And yet, poor fool, you name him as your heir,  
Content the rascal should succeed to you !  
' He sent fat gifts,' you say : so anglers do ;  
But earn they gratitude from silly fish ?  
If you would have him mourn with sorrow true,  
Then leave him nothing, you will have your wish.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXIV

TO AN ENVIOUS DETRACTOR :

A HEXAMETER POEM

You are not of the Fabian sort,  
Nor such a one as Curius' lady,  
When she her ploughman's luncheon brought,  
Gave birth to 'neath an oak-tree shady.  
Your mother's trade I will not name,  
Your father shaves before a glass,  
And though you have a wife, the dame  
Addresses you as—' Pretty lass.'

But yet you dare to criticise  
My books, and slate them without pity,  
Though they find favour in the eyes  
Of men of rank in court and city.  
Great Silius deems them worth a place,  
Upon his bookshelves you will meet them,  
And Regulus admires their grace—  
In rounded tones will oft repeat them.

Dear Sura too who lives close by  
Diana on the Aventine,  
And thence the Circus can espy,  
Admires them, just because they're mine.  
And most of all, our mighty Chief,  
On whom the weight of Empire falls,  
In these light trifles finds relief  
And often for a volume calls.

Yet you forsooth have keener wit  
Than in these great ones we shall find.  
Your taste—Minerva sharpened it,  
And subtle Athens formed your mind.  
Why, damn it all, the offal meat  
Is far less rank than your behaviour,  
Which butchers hawk from street to street  
And vex our noses with its savour.

You dare at me to aim that stuff  
Which spoils the paper where 'tis written :  
Well, if you stir my bile enough  
You'll find yourself severely bitten.  
My teeth in you will set a mark  
That barber's tricks will ne'er erase.  
So curb your disagreeable bark  
And don't attempt a bear to face.

He may at first quite placid be  
 And lick your hand in gentle fashion,  
 But if you hurt him you will see  
 What bears can do when in a passion.  
 So do not you the strife begin  
 Nor yet provoke his foaming jaw.  
 Bite, if you must, an empty skin  
 And find some quiet meat to gnaw.

## LXV

*ON EPIGRAM LXIV*

'HEXAMETERS for epigrams'—absurd!  
 Such breach of rules, you say, is simply awful!  
 Yet others use that metre—in a word,  
 'Tis lawful.  
 But yours are long, you say: That's lawful too:  
 Many have written so, you can't deter them,  
 And you can read the distiches if you  
 Prefer them.  
 We'll make a bargain—you shall license me  
 To write long epigrams nor need to clip them,  
 While, Tuca, on your part you shall be free  
 To skip them.

## \* LXVI

*THE BOLD AUCTIONEER*

OUR friend Gellianus had sent him for sale  
 A certain young damsel—whereby hangs a tale.  
 She was one of the sort who Suburra frequent  
 And bore some plain signs of the life she had spent;  
 So wishing to show there was not any risk—  
 For the bidding ran low and was not at all brisk—  
 He plucked up his courage and kissed the coy dear,  
 Twice, thrice, and again, just to make matters clear.  
 And what do you think by his courage he got?  
 The one bid—five pounds—was withdrawn on the spot.

## LXVII

CUR tantum eunuchos habeat tua Caelia, quaeris,  
 Pannyche? Uolt futui Caelia nec parere.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXVIII

## *THE DEATH OF EUTYCHOS*

WEEP for your crime, weep o'er the Lucrine lake,  
Ye Naiads, till your cries e'en Thetis wake.  
For Eutychos 'neath Baiae's waves you drew  
And for my Castricus his comrade slew,  
Who was his comfort and his chiefest joy,  
Loved by our bard as Virgil loved his boy.

Did the nymph see thee naked in the mere  
And give Alcides back his Hylas dear?  
Or does the goddess in thy love delight  
And for thy arms neglect Hermaphrodite?  
Whate'er the cause of rape so sudden be,  
Let earth, I pray, and wave be kind to thee.

\* LXIX

## *A PROBLEM*

I DON'T wonder your Bassa wants water to drink ;  
But why should her daughter? I really can't think.

LXX

## *HEALTH IS WEALTH*

His sixtieth harvest-tide is done,  
Nay more, yet by his own confession,  
Of all his days no single one  
Was lost by fever's fell oppression.

At Dason, Alcon, Symmachus,  
He points a gay and mocking finger ;  
Ah, friend, 'tis different with us,  
Though long our life may seem to linger.

Fever and weariness and pain—  
Of many days have these bereft us ;  
Leave these unreckoned, few remain,  
And little of real life is left us.

Aye, we are babes of tender age—  
 To count by years is idle dreaming—  
 The Trojan king, the Pylian sage,  
 Were only old to outward seeming.

The blunderer who deems them so,  
 Misreckons life and much mistakes it,  
 He thinks 'tis drawing breath—we know  
 'Tis health alone that mars or makes it.

\* LXXI

*THE RETURN*

TELETHUSA knows well how to dance a fandango  
 When the castanets sound or a soft wanton tango,  
 A charmer who could have set Pelias on fire  
 Or tempted King Priam to leave Hector's pyre.  
 To-day she has got her old man on the rack :  
 She was sold as a slave, and as mistress bought back.

LXXII

*SACRILEGE*

ONCE a Cilician rascal tried  
 To raid a garden : far and wide  
 He searched, but nothing he espied  
     Above the barren sod,  
 Except the stone Priapus, foe  
 To thieves, but he was loth to go  
 All empty-handed thence—and so  
     He stole the guardian god !

\* LXXIII

*A STATUE OF PRIAPUS*

'Twas no rude ditcher made me with rough knife,  
 The steward's work am I and true to life.  
 For Hilarus upon these smiling hills  
 The richest farm in Caere's village tills.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

I seem not made of wood, so clear I'm shown ;  
Nor shall my emblem to the fire be thrown.  
For look, this cypress phallus deathless stands,  
As though it came from Phidias' own hands.  
So, neighbours, to Priapus' honour pay,  
And from these fourteen acres keep away.

\* LXXIV

### *THE TOOTHLESS GUEST*

THOUGH the three hairs he's left make smooth paths  
on his pate,  
And he takes the best place at the table,  
And uses a toothpick ; it's not what he ate.  
He's no teeth and to bite is not able.

\* LXXV

### *TO PONTIA*

A THRUSH, and a cake, and a leg of a hare,  
You send me, most delicate food you declare.  
I won't give them away ; they shall stay on my shelf.  
But—I don't think somehow I shall eat them myself.

\* LXXVI

### *ON A ROMAN TOMB IN DACIA*

HERE Fuscus lies, who did our Emperor guard  
And in the Palace keep his civic ward.  
Yet this at least is granted him by Fate ;  
His tombstone need not fear the foemen's hate.  
For now the Dacians to our empire bow  
And as their lord the victor's shade allow.

\* LXXVII

### *TO AFER*

YOU'RE as poor as a church-mouse, as strong as a horse,  
As brisk as a prize-fighter full of brute force,  
And yet you delight on six shoulders to ride,  
In spite of the fact that you're laughed at and guyed

More than you would be if you strolled through the town  
 Quite stripped to the buff and to all naked shown.  
 A giant astride of a mule his own size  
 Would not be a mark for more wondering eyes ;  
 A mahout on an elephant would not attract  
 More scornful attention, and that is a fact.  
 Don't you see how your litter in all our throats sticks ;  
 Why even your corpse should not be borne by six.

## LXXVIII

*CURE WORSE THAN DISEASE*

ONE eye was gone and the other dim,  
 But a notable thirst had he.  
 ' Drink no more wine,' said the leech to him,  
 ' Or blind you will surely be ! '

He smiled and said to his sight, ' Good-bye,'  
 And he drank both deep and long—  
 What next ? He poisoned his only eye,  
 But his thirst is well and strong.

## \* LXXIX

*TO LUPUS*

IN spite of your luck you seem gloomy of late :  
 Take care, or Dame Fortune will dub you ' Ingrate.'

## LXXX

*ROSES IN WINTER*

HER winter roses Nile hath sent to thee,  
 Caesar, in boastful mood and deemed them rare ;  
 But now her envoy marvelling to see  
 Thy gate, holds Pharos' garden poor and bare ;  
 He marked sweet Flora's treasure everywhere  
 And splendour from the Paestan rosaries ;  
 Where'er he turned there met his wandering eyes  
 A street ablaze with wreaths, a flower-clad Rome.  
 Egypt, thou canst not match our Roman skies,  
 Send us thy sheaves and take our roses home.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXXI

## TO CHARIDEMUS

You must have a grudge against every poor bather  
When you plunge in the bath and begin there to lather  
Your middle. What's that? 'You are washing your head.'  
We'd rather it was then your middle instead.

\* LXXXII

## TO RUFUS

A FELLOW last week scanned me this way and that,  
As though I were a slave or a prize-fighter fat  
That he wanted to purchase, and when with his eye  
And finger he'd shown me to each passer-by,  
He ventured at last to come nearer a bit,  
And said: 'Tell me, pray, are you Martial the wit,  
With whose funny verses all men are acquainted,  
Who are not with Philistine boorishness tainted.'  
I bowed and replied with my most civil leer—  
'The person you mention you see standing here.'  
'Why then,' quoth the stranger, 'that shocking bad gown?'  
'I'm a shocking bad poet,' said I, 'that I own.'  
For a bard one such contretemps surely's enough.  
So send me, dear friend, a new gown of good stuff.

\* LXXXIII

## TO DOMITIAN

THE debt that Etruscus the elder doth owe  
To his son's fond petition all men must allow  
Is due, Sire, to thee from them both on this day;  
For the lightning thou sent thou hast bid pass away.  
Ah, would that Jove's fires were equally kind;  
Then seldom full use for them all would he find.  
From thy bounty, Etruscus, two favours has earned:  
With his father to exile he went—and returned.

\* LXXXIV

## RIGHT JUDGMENT

ON eight shoulders Philippus is carried along:  
If you think he's all right, you yourself are all wrong.

## LXXXV

*ON THE DEATH OF RUFUS*

THE book is done, but dead the dear desire  
 That you should read it, friend ; you are afar.  
 An evil land seen 'neath a baneful star  
 Sends but thy dust and ashes to thy sire.

Weep, sad Bononia, orphaned of thy son,  
 Let all Aemilius' way resound with grief.  
 How bright that piety, that life how brief,  
 But five Olympiads passed and all was done !

Rufus, you loved to con my verses gay,  
 To hold them in your heart in memory,  
 Take now my sorrowing song and let it be  
 The incense of a friend from far away.

## LXXXVI

*THE SICK POET*

O SETINE vintage, queenly snow,  
 Ye generous bumpers, tell me—  
 When shall I drink again with no  
 Begrudging leech to quell me.

Unworthy of the gift divine  
 That precious Bacchus offers,  
 The graceless loon prefers to wine  
 The wealth of Midas' coffers.

May he that doth your joys withhold  
 Amass from every quarter  
 All Libya's corn, all Tagus' gold,  
 But let him drink hot water !

## \* LXXXVII

*TO DOMITIAN*

MAY thou and God bestow  
 Whate'er is due to thee.  
 If aught to me men owe,  
 Grant, thou and God, my plea.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXXVIII

## TO CAECILIANUS

I CHANCED yesterday on my patron to call  
And used his bare name without titles at all.  
Do you ask what it cost me, this freedom of tongue?  
I was docked of my dole, and I'm half-a-crown wrong.

\* LXXXIX

## FULL MEASURE

WHEN our friend Squire Allgood had got through a lot  
Of liquor last night, he called loud for a pot.  
So they brought him a jar which himself he had drained  
And alone put away all the wine it contained,  
While he then most exactly and quite at his leisure  
Repaid to the vessel his debt in full measure.  
Do you wonder the jar all his liquor could hold?  
There's no need, my good friend: he drinks neat, I am told.

\* XC

## TO GELLIA

' I HAVE only one lover '—you loudly persist.  
The sin is the worse: you're a rank bigamist.

\* XCI

## TO ZOILUS

OUR lord's sacred edicts adultery ban.  
But *you* need not fear; for you are not a man.

XCII

## THE TOKEN

A SNAKE round Ammianus' cup doth twine,  
Wrought there by Myron's art: i'faith, 'tis fit  
His cup should bear a serpent as a sign  
Of the vile poison that he drinks from it.

## \* XCIII

*A DIFFICULT TASK*

THÄIS smells even worse than a fuller's old crock,  
 When, set in the street, it succumbs to a knock,  
 A he-goat when rutting, a lion's foul breath,  
 A skin of a dog done by tanners to death,  
 A chicken gone rotten while still in the shell,  
 A jar filled with sauce that has not kept too well.  
 So wishing somehow to disguise this foul reek,  
 Whenever she comes to the baths in the week,  
 She's covered with unguent and vinegared flour  
 And layers of powder at least three or four.  
 But spite of these dodges, and do what she will,  
 The fact is that Thäis of Thäis smells still.

## XCIV

*ON CALPETIANUS*

WHENE'ER he dines he's served on gold in state,  
 In town or out, in company, alone,  
 Aye at an inn! Has he no meaner plate?  
 No, he has none; for this is not his own.





BOOK SEVEN



I

*ON DOMITIAN'S CUIRASS*

THY breastplate, dread as Pallas' own, whereon  
 The Gorgon dare not gaze, now, Caesar, don !  
 Seems it but mortal armour ? It shall be  
 A very Aegis when it touches thee.

\* II

*ON THE SAME*

THOU who to Sarmate arrows ne'er wilt yield,  
 More trusty than the War God's Getic shield,  
 Woven from countless boars with talons bright  
 And proof against e'en Meleager's might,  
 Rejoice, good cuirass, in thy happy part  
 To guard our god and touch his beating heart.  
 Go thou unharmed and soon, the triumph won,  
 Restore our chief the palm-leaved gown to don.

III

*THE REASON*

YOU ask me why my books were never sent ?  
 For fear you might return the compliment.

IV

*THE ESSENTIAL*

To pallid skin his verse is due,  
 To this alone we owe it ;  
 He thought that interesting hue  
 Enough to make a poet.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* V

## *TO DOMITIAN ON THE DANUBE*

IF for thy people's love thou hast a care,  
And wilt a joyful issue grant to prayer,  
Then, sire, give back our god : Rome grudges thee  
To foreign lands though thou victorious be.  
Our foemen have the Lord of Earth in sight,  
And in thy face find terror and delight.

\* VI

## *ON THE SAME*

DOTH Caesar now to Ausonia wend his way  
From that far land where northern frosts hold sway ?  
No token sure have we, but Rumour's voice—  
Fain would I think her true—cries loud ' Rejoice.'  
Glad faces at the notice-boards are seen  
And martial spears are wreathed with garlands green.  
Soon Rome thy glorious triumph's tale shall tell,  
And hail thee once again ' Invincible.'  
But now, that we in joy may more believe,  
Come thou thyself the laurel to receive.

\* VII

## *ON THE SAME*

E'EN though the wintry North and Peucë's ice  
And wanton Rhine, his horn now shattered thrice,  
And Danube glowing with fierce horse's feet,  
Would keep thee, sire, while thou dost bring defeat  
Upon their perjured realms, thou canst not stay  
Now longer from thy people : hark, they pray  
Alone for thy return, whom Lord Supreme  
And Father of the World we Romans deem.  
In mind and thought we all are there with thee,  
And in the circus so thy face we see,  
That people know not, when the race is done,  
Whether the Sparrow or the Tiger's won.

## \* VIII

*ON THE SAME*

Now, now, ye Muses, sport ; for 'tis the time  
 Our victor god returns from northern clime.  
 Thou first, December, bade the folk rejoice ;  
 Soon we may cry—' He comes '—with lifted voice.  
 Happy thy lot ! We could not let thee go  
 If January's joys thou didst bestow.  
 Soon shall wreathed soldiers fling their jests afar,  
 Walking attendant on thy laurelled car ;  
 For Triumph loves the merry song and joke,  
 And even Caesar then will banter brook.

## IX

*A PROMISING YOUTH*

AT sixty years of age is he  
 A man of promise still :  
 Methinks he needs eternity  
 That promise to fulfil !

## X

*THE BUSYBODY*

EROS and Linus are debauched, you say.  
 Their private life is no concern to you ;  
 If Matho's mistress costs him thousands, pray,  
 Does that expense deplete your revenue ?  
 And, seeing you can snore the whole night through,  
 What matter though Sertorius drink till day ?  
 Is Lupus deep in debt ? If you refuse  
 To give or lend to him you will not lose.  
 Your own concerns that need attending to  
 You carefully ignore and thrust away—  
 Your clothes unpaid for still, tho' far from new,  
 That no one now will trust you for a day ;  
 Item, your lady is a trifle gay ;  
 Item, your daughter's dower is overdue ;  
 So with a dozen points ; but I agree  
 That your affairs are no concern to me.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XI

## TO PUDENS

You ask me, dear Pudens, to make my corrections  
Myself in your copy and cure imperfections.  
You're really too kind and too easy to please,  
When you want my own hand in such trifles as these.

\* XII

## TO FAUSTINUS

So may the Emperor read me with calm brow  
And to my jests his wonted favour show,  
E'en whom I justly hate I ne'er revile,  
Nor strive for glory with a scoffing smile.  
Yet what avails it? Knaves to me assign  
Their own scurrilities and call them mine,  
And shrinking cowardly from the honest light  
Under my name breathe out their snakish spite.  
My jests you know are harmless, that I swear  
By Fame's bright spirit, and by the Muses dear  
And by thy love, kind reader, who by me  
Art judged a god, from cruel envy free.

XIII

## A MIRACLE

IN Tibur's sunshine she was told  
That ivory though stained and old  
    May win its whiteness back ;  
Alcides' hills have potent air ;  
A little while she sojourned there  
    And now returns jet black.

\* XIV

## TO AULUS

My girl has just suffered a most cruel blow,  
Her favourite plaything she's lost, you must know.  
It was not a sparrow like that which of yore  
Catullus to Lesbia could not restore.

## BOOK SEVEN

Nor was it a dove such as Stella to-day  
From his darling Ianthis saw stolen away.  
My girl is not taken by trifles so vain,  
And the loss of a bird would not cause her much pain.  
She has lost her pet page-boy who promised to be  
In his virile appendage a real prodigy.

\* XV

### *ON A STATUE OF THE BOY ARGYNNUS*

HAS Hylas fled the fountain's naiad queen,  
Or who is this by Ianthis' waters seen ?  
Well is it that Alcides' shrine is nigh  
And that he can these wanton waves espy.  
Serve then thy spring, Argynnus, nor have care  
Of amorous nymphs : the god himself beware.

XVI

### *A LIKELY CUSTOMER*

I'VE not a shilling left ; what can I do  
Save sell your presents ? May I sell them you ?

XVII

### *ON THE LIBRARY OF JULIUS MARTIALIS*

FAR o'er the town thy window looks,  
Fair library, nor hears its din :  
Shrine of the graver Muse's books,  
Can gay Thalia venture in ?

Upon thy lowest shelf may stand  
These seven scrolls of wit and mirth  
Purged thoroughly by the author's hand—  
'Tis this alone that gives them worth—

Yet guard them well, be proud in them,  
Though small my gift of love may be,  
The world shall hail it as the gem  
Of Julius' far-famed library.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XVIII

CUM tibi sit facies de qua nec femina possit  
Dicere, cum corpus nulla litura notet,  
Cur te tam rarus cupiat repetatque fututor  
Miraris? Uitium est non leue, Galla, tibi.  
Accessi quotiens ad opus mixtisque mouemur  
Inguinibus, cunnus non tacet, ipsa taces.  
Di facerent ut tu loquereris et ille taceret:  
Offendor cunni garrulitate tui.  
Pedere te mallet: namque hoc nec inutile dicit  
Symmachus et risum res mouet ista simul.  
Quis ridere potest fatui poppysmata cunni?  
Cum sonat hic, cui non mentula mensque cadit?  
Dic aliquid saltem clamosoque obstrepe cunno  
Et, si adeo muta es, disce uel inde loqui.

## XIX

### *ON A FRAGMENT OF THE ARGO*

THOUGH but a worthless log it seem to be,  
Of old through seas, unknown before, it steered;  
Unscathed it passed the Clashing Rocks, nor feared  
The deadlier perils of the Scythian Sea;  
And now, though Time, the Victor, vanquish thee,  
Brave plank, what stately ship is so revered?

## \* XX

### *THE GLUTTON*

FOR vile greedy tricks Santra beats all creation.  
When he hears of a dinner, for his invitation  
He angles for weeks, and then hurries off straight  
To the banqueting hall lest perchance he be late.  
To start with he asks—'seven helpings of boar,'  
And snatches some oysters to add to his score:  
Then seizes the legs and the wings of a hare,  
And lyingly shouts—'I have had no field-fare.'  
With mouthfuls of cake his soiled napkin he stains  
Wherein a small scrap of pomegranate remains,  
And raisins and mushrooms, and figs oozing ripe  
And a horrible skin from the stuffing of tripe.

## BOOK SEVEN

When the napkin at last no more fragments can hold  
He hides his gnawed bones in his toga's warm fold,  
And with them a pigeon devoid of its head,  
Nor thinks any harm his hand downward to spread  
And gather the pieces the dogs would not eat  
And fill up with heel-taps a jar at his feet.  
At the end when all's finished up two hundred stairs  
With his load on his shoulder he gaily repairs,  
And when to his garret he safely has got,  
The very next morning—*he sells all the lot.*

\* XXI

### ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF LUCAN'S BIRTH

THIS is the day which, proud of that great birth,  
Gave Lucan to thee, Polla, and to earth.  
Ah, cruel Nero ! murder 'twas most foul.  
This crime at least lies heavy on thy soul.

\* XXII

### ON THE SAME

SMILE, all ye Muses, on this sacred morn  
When Lucan, bard of Phoebus, erst was born ;  
Since that great day 'tis only just, I deem,  
Baetis should mingle with Castalia's stream.

\* XXIII

### ON THE SAME

COME, Phoebus, come ; as when thou didst inspire  
The second singer of our Roman quire  
To thunderous strains of war. What shall I pray  
From heaven that may befit this glorious day ?  
Only that Polla still her love may show  
To his great shade, and he her love may know.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXIV

### *THE MISCHIEF-MAKER*

THOU would'st embroil me with my Juvenal !  
What wilt not dare ? A tongue so treacherous  
Might sour the love of Pylades to gall,  
Or sever Theseus from Pirithous,  
Pollux from Castor, rob Amphinomus  
Or Agamemnon of a brother's heart ;  
No fouler thing can be,—I curse thee thus,  
Mayst thou continue even what thou art !

## \* XXV

### *TO A RIVAL POET*

YOUR verses are full of a sugary grace,  
As spotless and pure as a well-powdered face,  
Not an atom of salt or suspicion of gall,  
So how can they but on an audience pall !  
Even food does not please if the cooking's too simple,  
And cheeks lack in charm when they haven't a dimple.  
A child may like apples and figs without savour ;  
But give me the sort that have got a sharp flavour.

## XXVI

### *TO APOLLINARIS*

Go seek my friend and, if his cares permit,  
Give him this book whatever be its worth ;  
Some it must have, for he hath part in it,  
And let his taste refine my simpler mirth ;  
Go then my verse and, if he smile on thee,  
Seek that protection I have known of yore ;  
Such passion for my merry muse hath he  
That I myself could hardly love her more.  
Needst thou a patron mighty to defend  
If spite assail thee ? Go and seek my friend.

## XXVII

## ON A PRESENT OF A WILD BOAR

ON Tuscan acorns fed, in monster size  
 He yields to Melcager's boar alone,  
 Now pierced by Dexter's glittering spear he lies  
 In bulk that makes my humble kitchen groan ;  
 Hearth gods, grow fat, in unctuous vapour bask,  
 Strip a whole hill for festal logs—but hold !  
 How vast a mound of spice the cook will ask  
 And for a crafty sauce good wine and old ;  
 Return, thou costly brute ; my fire aghast  
 Shrinks from thy bulk : *'Tis cheaper far to fast.*

## XXVIII

## TO FUSCUS

FRIEND may your woods where Dian roves  
 Grow still more fair for you,  
 Though oft you lop the leafy groves  
 May these their grace renew.  
 Rich olives in Tartessus grow,  
 Be yours more full and fine ;  
 And your vast cisterns overflow  
 With pure and sweetest wine.  
 Let all admire that silver tongue  
 That court and forum sways,  
 And o'er your doors the palm be hung  
 To tell the victor's praise ;  
 But let the Saturnalia bring  
 A little holiday,  
 Then hear these merry songs I sing  
 And polish them I pray—  
 ' A parlous task,' you say, ' to tell  
 Plain truth to any bard !'  
 You love to hear the truth so well,  
 To tell it is not hard.

## \* XXIX

## TO THESTYLUS

DEAR Thestylus, Voconius Victor's joy  
 And pleasant torment, most beloved boy,  
 I pray that fair without your locks you seem  
 And that your bard no maid more comely deem.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A little while his learned scrolls lay by  
While to your lord I read my poetry.  
So great Maecenas, who could Virgil hear,  
Let Marsus' dark Melaenis charm his ear.

## XXX

### *THE EXOTIC LOVER*

CAELIA, you love a Teuton swain,  
An Asiatic stirs your pity,  
For you swart Indians cross the main,  
Copts flock to you from Pharos' city.

A Jew, a Scythian cavalier,  
Can please you—but I can't discover  
Why you, a Roman, are austere  
To none except a Roman lover.

## XXXI

### *COUNTRY PRODUCE!*

THESE cackling fowls and eggs I send you,  
These Chian figs grown ripe in tempered heat,  
The shaggy kid for which his dam doth bleat,  
The cabbage white with rime of frozen dew  
That hath not marred the olives' tender hue,  
Think you that all are from my country-seat?

Nay, Regulus, you will not understand,  
Naught in my starveling field could you descry  
Save me; far Umbria doth your need supply  
And rich suburban gardens nigh at hand:  
What Tusculum doth yield at your demand  
I hunt through all the market-place to buy.

## \* XXXII

### *TO ATTICUS*

OF an eloquent race you're reviving the name,  
And let not your house lie forgotten by fame:  
Minerva's good votaries ever attend you  
And sages delight their wise leisure to lend you.

Other youths with a thick-eared old boxer you see  
 And a filthy masseur takes his scarcely-earned fee ;  
 But you don't prepare for your bath with a ball—  
 Whether bladder or feather or solid withal—  
 Nor strike with blunt sword at some poor dummy image,  
 Nor darting with speed snatch the ball from the scrimmage,  
 Nor yet waste your time at the wrestler's toil  
 With arms set akimbo all covered with oil.  
 You go for a run where the clear Virgo flows  
 Or where Europe's bull in the portico shows.  
 To trifle with games in a square, I confess,  
 When one might take a run, is just sheer idleness.

## \* XXXIII

*TO CINNA*

YOUR toga is filthy, your shoes white as snow ;  
 But your toga hangs down so your feet do not show.  
 Pull it up, silly fellow, and let them appear :  
 As it is their effect is quite wasted, I fear.

## \* XXXIV

*ON THE BATHS OF CHARINUS*

How is it, you ask, that a rascal so low,  
 As Charinus could yet this one service bestow ?  
 I'll explain. Was not Nero a monster confessed,  
 Yet are not his baths still accounted the best ?  
 At this some base knave with a sly sneering nod  
 May remark—' To the gifts of our master and god  
 You prefer something else '—Nay, that is your vile fancy.  
 I preferred Nero's baths to the baths of a Nancy.

## XXXV

INGUINA succinctus nigra tibi seruos aluta  
 Stat, quotiens calidis tota foueris aquis.  
 Sed meus, ut de me taceam, Laecania, seruos  
 Iudaeum nuda sub cute pondus habet,  
 Sed nudi tecum iuuenesque senesque lauantur.  
 An sola est serui mentula uera tui ?  
 Ecquid femineos sequeris, matrona, recessus,  
 Secretusque tua, cunne, lauaris aqua ?

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXVI

## *A REMINDER TO STELLA*

WHAT time my rugged cot endured the bane  
Of winter's drenching floods, your kindly care  
Sent wherewithal the havoc to repair  
And so my roof defies the sudden rain.  
Think how rude Boreas roars ; the boon is vain  
That clothes the farm but leaves the farmer bare.

XXXVII

## *THE DEATH SIGNAL*

You know the dread signal of death I suppose ?  
But one whimsical quaestor has lately ordained  
A new one, and said if he once blew his nose  
It was sentence of death on the culprit arraigned.  
Till winter drew on was the custom maintained,  
Then the judge caught catarrh from December's chill breath  
And his colleagues rushed up and his hands they restrained  
Or all the accused had been sentenced to death.

XXXVIII

## *ON TWO MONSTROSITIES SHOWN IN THE CIRCUS*

THE Cyclops of old, could he only behold  
Polyphemus, would start with surprise,  
And Scylla for shame's sake would turn from her namesake  
So ghastly their faces and size.  
Ah, would it were fated the pair should be mated  
Their terror they hardly could smother,  
Just think of the sight when each shuddered with fright  
And fainted at view of the other !

XXXIX

## *PRETENCE COMES TRUE*

FRIEND Caelius vowed he would no longer bear  
To run and dance attendance everywhere  
On Patrons, face their haughtiness and scorn  
Or be compelled to greet them every morn.

So to escape these toils he feigned the gout,  
 But, fearing lest his patron found him out,  
 With drugs he smeared and bandaged both his feet,  
 And crawled with dragging footsteps down the street ;  
 So well he feigned disease, when he had not it,  
 That now he shams no more ; for he has got it.

\* XL

*ON THE TOMB OF CLAUDIUS ETRUSCUS  
 AND HIS WIFE*

HERE lies the sage, long in the palace known,  
 Who bore the Emperor's favour and his frown  
 Undaunted. By their children's love at rest  
 Husband and wife are of one grave possessed.  
 She died in youth, robbed of her life's spring bloom ;  
 The father to his ninetieth year did come.  
 Yet all who see his children's tears believe  
 That they for one untimely taken grieve.

XLI

*THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD*

You boast ' The world's my country ! ' Be it so ;  
 It takes all sorts to make a world you know !

XLII

*TO CASTRICUS*

WHO can dispute with you the meed  
 For tuneful verse or noble deed ?  
 Not I, who readily concede  
     The palm ;  
 'Tis ease and quiet I pursue—  
 ' Then why send feeble verses ? ' True,  
 Yet coals to Newcastle can do  
     No harm.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XLIII

## *SHILLY-SHALLY*

THE best you can do is to grant my demand,  
Your second-best course to refuse it off-hand ;  
I welcome assent and denial excuse—  
But, Cinna, you neither consent nor refuse.

\* XLIV

## *TO OVIDIUS, WITH A PORTRAIT OF CAESONIUS*

HERE in this bust your dear Caesonius lives,  
And in the wax his very look survives.  
Nero condemned him ; but you boldly dared  
To condemn the tyrant and his exile shared.  
You would not in the consul's cortège go,  
But went, a banished man, to Scylla's flow.  
If names I write shall long endurance have  
And these my books survive my mortal grave,  
Know, future ages and this age to-day,  
His care for Seneca you did him repay.

XLV

## *TO THE SAME*

'Tis he, the friend of Seneca, not less  
Beloved than dear Serenus of the sage,  
Whose kindly greetings writ on many a page  
Serve still to testify his tenderness.

And you that crossed the wide Sicilian sea  
To follow him and share his exile drear,  
Ovid, we praise you still and hold you dear,  
Who scorned a monarch's frenzied tyranny.

The days of old of Pylades may prate  
Who to a wrathful woman's victim clave,  
Thine, Ovid, was the nobler part, to brave—  
And all for love—a Nero's cruel hate.

## XLVI

*TO PRISCUS*

WHILST you attempt your present to commend  
 In verses fit for Homer's approbation,  
 You suffer agonies, ambitious friend,  
 And I starvation ;  
 'Tis Martial suffers while your Muse is mute ;  
 The rich can wait for verse—on them bestow it :  
 Hard cash, tho' unaccompanied, would suit  
 A needy poet.

## \* XLVII

*TO LICINIUS SURA, ON HIS RECOVERY  
 FROM SICKNESS*

SURA, 'mid learned men most famed of all,  
 Whose tongue our ancient grandsires did recall,  
 Oh by what grace did Fate to us restore  
 Thy life which near had come to Lethe's shore !  
 Our fears were past ; at ease we wept and sighed  
 And in our thoughts at least our friend had died.

But death's dark king that odium could not brave,  
 And to the fates again their distaff gave.  
 Thou knowest now what grief thy false death brought  
 And canst enjoy posthumous fame unsought.  
 Live as on booty then : pluck joy in haste :  
 Life thus restored has not one day to waste.

## \* XLVIII

*TO ANNIUS*

AT three hundred tables your fare might be spread,  
 But with you we find three hundred waiters instead.  
 They snatch off the plates and make each course fly fast.  
 Enough ! I don't care for a walking repast.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLIX

## TO SEVERUS

EGGS for your meal and dessert apples, friend,  
As gifts from my suburban home I send.

\* L

## ON A FOUNTAIN

FOUNTAIN wherein Ianthis doth delight,  
Glory of garden and of mansion bright,  
Where youths in marble beauty deck the mead,  
And each cool wave reflects a Ganymede,  
What does Alcides in yon woodland shrine?  
Why holds the god a grot so near to thine?  
Does he keep guard against the Naiads, pray,  
Lest every Hylas should be stolen away?

LI

## TO URBICUS

You want to hear my verse, but not to buy it?  
If that's your longing, you can gratify it:  
Find Auctus (near Mars' temple is his dwelling,  
Perhaps you know the man and need no telling)  
In civic as in legal lore a leader,  
He is himself my book and no mere reader.  
A written scroll could not record it better,  
He reels it off, and never drops a letter,  
So if he said 'twas his, all would believe him,  
But were my fame diminished, that would grieve him.  
Call about four, till then he's not at leisure,  
And dine *à deux*; he will recite with pleasure;  
The while you drink, declaiming endless verse for you;  
If you are bored, why then so much the worse for you:  
Cry 'Hold—enough,' yet on he still will run with it,  
You cannot stop him once he has begun with it.

## LII

*TO AUCTUS*

FRIEND, it is pleasant that you read  
 My verse to Celer—if indeed  
     He cares to hear ;  
 But since he ruled my native shore  
 Where none was feared and trusted more,  
     I shrink in fear ;  
 No common auditor is he,  
 And such a critic well may be  
     A judge severe.

## \* LIII

*TO UMBER*

ALL the presents this year that at Christmas you got  
 You have sent on to me—and they are a choice lot !  
 Seven toothpicks, twelve tablets, a napkin, a mug,  
 A half-peck of beans, and a sponge, and a jug  
 Of Laletan wine, some dried prunes, and a casket  
 Of Picenian olives, and figs in a basket.  
 I think that in all they were worth half a crown ;  
 Yet it took eight big footmen to carry them down.  
 You'd have found it less trouble one page-boy to send  
 With five pounds of plate as your present, my friend.

## LIV

*OMENS*

EACH morn you tell some evil dream you've had  
 About me, till you drive me nearly mad ;  
 To charms I have resorted to divine  
 The omen ; that has used up all my wine,  
 My salted meal, whole mounds of frankincense,  
 And half my flocks and herds—a vain expense.  
 Pigs, fowls, and eggs are gone ; for mercy's sake  
 Do dream about yourself—or stay awake.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LV

## *TO CHRESTUS*

THOUGH you send me no presents I'd not care a bit  
If it were not that Tom, Dick, and Harry, and Kit  
Get plenty. The next time you play dirty tricks,  
I'll ask you on some Jewish gentry to fix.

\* LVI

## *TO RABIRIUS, ARCHITECT OF DOMITIAN'S PALACE*

To heaven thou must in thought at least have come  
Who didst design our Emperor's palace home.  
Were Phidian Jove due lodging to receive,  
Pisa would beg our God thy aid to give.

LVII

## *LADY'S FAVOURS*

HE was great with the gloves, but the lady he loves  
Said boxing must now be deserted ;  
A Knight she has made him, and so has displayed him  
As Pollux to Castor converted.

\* LVIII

## *TO GALLA*

SIX or seven young Nancies already you've wed,  
Allured by their beards and their neatly-brushed head.  
You test and you try them and find that each one  
Falls very much short and is much too soon done.  
So you give him the go-by and try a fresh sheet ;  
Only there once again disappointment to meet.  
You had better endeavour a sage to discover  
With rough, shaggy hair, if you want a true lover.  
And even with them you may light on a Nan :  
It is hard for a lady to find a real man.

\* LIX

*TO TITUS*

WHEN Caccilian dines, a boar's always on view.  
It's the one guest he has—and a proper one too.

\* LX

*TO JUPITER CAPITOLINUS*

O SACRED ruler of Tarpeia's hall,  
Whom, while our chief is safe, we Thunderer call ;  
Let other men to thee petition make  
And ask that they thy gifts divine may take ;  
But be not wroth with me if naught I crave,  
Nor bounty for myself desire to have.  
For Caesar all my prayers are made to heaven :  
From Caesar all I need is freely given.

\* LXI

*THE OPEN-AIR MARKET*

BOLD hucksters had seized on the roads all about,  
The contents of each shop you would see inside out,  
Till the Emperor told them to beat a retreat,  
And what was an alley made once more a street.  
No cups chained to pillars to-day are allowed,  
No barbers ply razors unseen in the crowd,  
No longer through mud do our magistrates stray,  
No longer do cookshops spread out o'er the way  
Within doors butcher, barber, cook, vintner remain :  
Rome was one big bazaar ; she's herself now again.

LXII

RECLUSIS foribus grandes percidis, Amille,  
Et te deprendi, cum facis ista, cupis,  
Ne quid liberti narrent seruique paterni  
Et niger obliqua garrulitate cliens.  
Non pedicari se qui testatur, Amille,  
Illud saepe facit quod sine teste facit.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXIII

### *ON SILIUS ITALICUS*

CON o'er his books that time shall not destroy,  
His songs well worthy Rome ; but, as ye read,  
Deem not Pieria was his only joy,  
That Bacchus' garland was his only meed.  
Virgilian fire had touched him not, until  
His golden tongue had earned a Tully's fame ;  
The forum looks with awe upon him still  
And grateful clients still revere his name.  
He ruled as consul through the wondrous year,  
That year made holy by a world made free ;  
These tasks well wrought, the Muses held him dear  
And now upon their mountain dwelleth he.

## LXIV

### *TO THE BARBER CINNAMUS*

You had won much renown as a barber in town  
And then got a knighthood by fraud  
Of an amorous lady—the business was shady  
And led you to hurry abroad ;  
Now your living is gone and the years will drag on,  
I pity your idle condition,  
You cannot profess to teach grammar—much less  
To be an expert rhetorician ;  
Philosophical preaching is vain, so is teaching,  
No hope at the bar you can harbour,  
And the claue is no good—so you can't if you would  
Be anything else but a barber.

## LXV

### *THE OBSTINATE LITIGANT*

You are weary and wan, yet the lawsuit drags on,  
Now its twentieth year is complete.  
So you must be a dunce ; it had ended at once  
Had you only admitted defeat.

## LXVI

*A POOR INVESTMENT*

IN Fabius' will sole legatee,  
 Why is not Labienus glad?  
 In courting the testator, he  
 Had spent far more than Fabius had.

## LXVII

PEDICAT pueros tribas Philaenis  
 Et tentigine saeuior mariti  
 Udenas dolat in die puellas.  
 Harpasto quoque subligata ludit  
 Et flauescit haphē, grauesque draucis  
 Halteras facili rotat lacerto,  
 Et putri lutulenta de palaestra  
 Uncti uerbere uapulat magistri:  
 Nec cenat prius aut recumbit ante  
 Quam septem uomuit meros deunces;  
 Ad quos fas sibi tunc putat redire,  
 Cum coloephia sedecim comedit.  
 Post haec omnia cum libidinatur,  
 Non fellat (putat hoc parum uirile),  
 Sed plane medias uorat puellas.  
 Di mentem tibi dent tuam, Philaeni,  
 Cunnum lingere quae putas uirile.

## LXVIII

*TO INSTANTIUS RUFUS*

BE cautious how you recommend  
 My verses to your father, friend;  
 The merry quip, the sportive whim,  
 Might hurt a sober soul like him;  
 But if he likes my wanton work  
 'Twould pass an elder of the Kirk.

## \* LXIX

*TO CANIUS*

BEHOLD Theophila, your promised bride,  
 Whose mind with Attic learning deep is dyed.  
 Well might the garden of the happy sage  
 Claim her and all the Stoic equipage.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

So little like the common female kind,  
Your books in her a critic sure will find ;  
For e'en Pantaenis cannot her outshine  
Though she be ranked with the Pierian nine.  
It was a lover praised fair Sappho's art,  
Your maid's as skilled and has a purer heart.

LXX

IPSARUM tribadum tribas, Philaeni,  
Recte, quam futuis, uocas amicam.

\* LXXI

## *AN UNFORTUNATE FAMILY*

THE wife and the husband both suffer from piles,  
And so does their daughter, her husband, and boy.  
The ulcer their steward and bailiff defiles,  
And every farm-hand who is in their employ ;  
There are piles on them all, both on young and on old :  
But piles of farm produce you'll nowhere behold.

\* LXXII

## *TO PAULUS*

I HOPE this December will bring you good store :  
Not trumpery tablets or napkins galore,  
Nor half pounds of incense—and short weight at that ;  
But may some rich client or millionaire fat  
Weigh in with some plate from his family treasure ;  
Or what will, I know, give you even more pleasure,  
May you beat all the experts you tackle at chess,  
And when you play ball in your light athlete's dress  
May you win the applause of the well-oiled bystanders,  
And beat even Polybus with his left-handers.  
Then if some low fellow should put down to me  
A lampoon all reeking of base jealousy,  
Come quick to my aid and protest—' This is spite—  
Such rubbish as that Martial never could write.'

## LXXIII

*TO MAXIMUS*

ONE house upon the Esquiline,  
 One where patricians dwell,  
 And hard beside Diana's shrine  
 You have a third as well.

You live near mournful Cybele,  
 You've Vesta's fane in view ;  
 Jove's ancient temple you can see,  
 You look upon the new.

With seven dwellings I despair  
 To find you when I call,  
 He who has mansions everywhere  
 Has not a home at all.

## \* LXXIV

*TO THE GOD MERCURY*

CYLLENE'S glory, heaven's pride, thou messenger with  
 cunning tongue,  
 Whose golden wand with coiling snake doth splendid shine  
 the gods among,  
 May thou thy stolen loves attain, fair Venus or young  
 Ganymede,  
 And may thy mother's Ides adorned with bay proclaim some  
 noble deed,  
 And Atlas bear a lighter load, if Carpus and Norbana now  
 To celebrate the nuptial day when first they met thou wilt  
 allow.

A pious priest of wisdom he to wisdom pays his gift of love,  
 Sending his incense up to thee and faithful also unto Jove.

## \* LXXV

*TO AN AMOROUS OLD WOMAN*

You are ancient and ugly and haven't got money :  
 But yet you expect your full share of love's honey.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXVI

## *THE TOADY*

To feasts and theatres you love to go  
With men of rank and, when you chance to meet,  
To lounge with them about a portico  
Or street.

They let you bathe and dine with them, but what  
Your dullard pride will never comprehend  
Is that you are their mountebank, and not  
Their friend.

LXXVII

## *PRESENTATION COPIES*

PRESENT you with my books? Not I indeed.  
I know you want to sell them, not to read.

LXXVIII

## *POOR FOR HIMSELF*

You dine on skate—or now and then  
On greasy beans; what is the reason  
That makes you send to other men  
The rarest dainties of the season?

Boar, oysters, truffles, mullet, hare,  
You give them. What an aberration,  
To grudge yourself that generous fare  
And spend your all on ostentation.

LXXIX

## *A CHOICE BRAND*

HE gave Consular wine when he asked me to dine,  
'What! Opimius' vintage?' you say,  
''Tis a brand of renown.' Nay, my host laid it down,  
And he was made consul to-day.

\* LXXX

*TO FAUSTINUS*

SINCE now our Roman peace the North refrains,  
 And war's grim trumpets cease their dreadful strains,  
 This little book to Marcellinus send,  
 For now to verse his leisure he can lend.  
 And if you wish the petty gift to increase  
 Send too a page to serve his hours of peace.  
 Not such a one as nursed by Getic cattle  
 On ice-bound rivers makes his hoopstick rattle,  
 But some young Lesbian boy whose cheeks glow warm,  
 Or Spartan yet unscourged by mother's arm.  
 He'll send to you instead from Hister's dales  
 A serf to feed your sheep in Tibur's vales.

LXXXI

*PROPORTIONS*

YOU'VE read my poems and condemn  
 Some thirty, so you say, of them :  
 The book's a good one I submit,  
 If there are thirty good in it.

\* LXXXII

*THE PRUDE*

MENOPHIL wore for all to see  
 A ' ceinturon de chastetè,'  
 Big enough for the company.

I thought he wished his voice to spare  
 And so this trusty guard did wear  
 To keep him from temptation clear.

But I was wrong : the other night,  
 When he was dancing full in sight,  
 It fell—he knows the game all right.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXXIII

## *AN ENDLESS TASK*

HIS face is so vast that his barber aghast  
Perceived, ere his shaving was done,  
A new crop had appeared ; there were whiskers and beard  
On the side where his task had begun.

LXXXIV

## *TO SECUNDUS WITH HIS BOOK*

MY portrait painted by a cunning hand  
Shall follow you, my little book, but go  
To subject Ister and the Getic land,  
For there Secundus rules the conquered foe.  
Well shall he love your petty worth, and know  
You show him Martial as no picture may ;  
No Time nor Chance shall mar your brightness, though  
Apelles' work has mouldered in decay.

LXXXV

## *TO SABELLUS*

YOUR few quatrains are not amiss,  
Your couplets too are neat ; for this  
You earn a mild regard,  
But little fame, for many men  
Can write good verses now and then—  
To make a book is hard.

LXXXVI

## *THE REASON AND EXCUSE*

YOU always asked me to attend  
Your birthday feasts when not your friend ;  
Then why this change—so sudden too ?  
For years you tried and proved me true,  
Yet now at last you leave me out—  
I know the cause beyond a doubt ;

No Spanish plate in compliment,  
 No dainty robe or cloak I sent,  
 Your 'generous' dinner to requite ;  
 'Tis gifts not friends that you invite.  
 Now you will say, 'That wretched slave  
 Forgot my note ; I'll beat the knave.'

\* LXXXVII

*PETS*

If Flaccus delights in a long-eared fox-hare,  
 If Canius dotes on his Libyan fair,  
 If Publius' darling's a dear little bitch,  
 And Cronius' a monkey as black as a witch,  
 If a knavish ichneumon gives Marius pleasure,  
 And his talking magpie seems to Lausus a treasure,  
 If Glaucilla entwines round her neck chilly snakes,  
 Telesilla a tomb for her nightingale makes ;  
 When they find their joy in such monsters as these,  
 Whom would not the face of fair Labycas please ?

LXXXVIII

*POETIC GLORY*

CAN this be true ? In fair Narbonne 'tis said  
 My books are loved, all boys and sages con them,  
 Sweet matrons read them openly nor dread  
 To see a lord austere look sourly on them !

I count it naught so I am praised of these,  
 Should farthest Nile to me her homage proffer,  
 Should Hybla and Hymettus feed my bees,  
 Or gold of Tagus fill my swollen coffer.

For this is fame indeed ; my heart was sad  
 And doubting feared lest flattering might deceive it ;  
 When Lausus damned one song in three as bad  
 I thought his judgment erred, but now believe it.

LXXXIX

*TO APOLLINARIS WITH A ROSE GARLAND*

Go happy rose, let thy soft petals bind  
 Those locks now bright, and if, when they are white  
 With Time's chill snows, thou still thereon art twined,  
 May fate be kind, and Venus never slight  
 The flower she choose, the flower of her delight.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XC

## *THE DULL LEVEL*

My work's uneven, you protest  
And sometimes falls beneath my best ;  
A compliment, say I :  
Dull bards on level plains that grope  
Shall never err—or soar—with Pope,  
Although they shine with Pye.

\* XCI

## *TO JUVENAL WITH A CHRISTMAS PRESENT*

THESE nuts at Saturn's feast to thee I send,  
Dear Juvenal, my friend.  
The rest to girls Priapus gave away,  
With whom he loves to play.

XCII

## *VAIN WORDS*

TEN times a day I've heard you say, ' If there is aught you  
need,  
Pray come to me and you will see I am a friend indeed.'  
I'm hailed for debt with angry threat, with usurers I plead,  
But though you hear, you are not clear if there is aught I  
need.  
My landlord came his rent to claim ; though there, you gave  
no heed  
To my distress, but cannot guess if there is aught I need.  
'Tis all in vain that I complain my cloak has run to seed.  
'Tis worn and chill ; you wonder still if there is aught I need.  
Ye stars malign, your powers combine false chatter to impede,  
And let this bore not ask me more if there is aught I need.

XCIII

## *TO QUINTUS OVIDIUS IN ABSENCE*

NARNIA, aloof upon thy cloven hill  
Where milk-white eddies ever whirl and play,  
Why wilt thou keep my Quintus from me still ?  
'Tis thy delight to hold my friend away ;

That spite doth mar the very fields I till ;  
 Save when he dwells thereby, no worth have they,  
 Spare me, nor let thy greed our friendship sever,  
 So may thy wondrous bridge endure for ever.

\* XCIV

*ON PAPILUS*

SOME unguent rare was kept with care  
 In a small onyx dish.  
 Papilus came and smelt the same—  
 And now it's putrid fish !

XCIV

*THE WINTER KISS*

IN December's frost and sleet  
 Still your chilly kisses greet  
 Every friend you chance to meet !  
 What a trick !  
 Such a vengeance to pursue  
 Were a cruel thing to do,  
 Though they all had beaten you  
 With a stick.  
 If my wife or little maid  
 To embrace me had essayed,  
 I had started quite afraid  
 In such weather,  
 And if you suppose your kiss  
 Is a yet sublimer bliss,  
 That idea you may dismiss  
 Altogether.  
 From your snout ('tis like a dog's)  
 Hangs the rime of frozen fogs,  
 And the beard it fairly clogs  
 Round your throat,  
 Where the shaggy mass coheres  
 Till it actually appears  
 Like the mass a shepherd shears  
 From a goat.  
 Though a greasy Gaul's caress  
 Might disgust me, I confess,  
 Would it cause such wretchedness  
 As you bring ?



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Common decency display,  
And in charity, I pray  
Put your kisses safe away  
Till the spring.

\* XCVI

## *ON A CHILD'S GRAVE*

SHED a tear and so pass by :  
Here a little child doth lie,  
Roman both by birth and name,  
Who to death too early came.  
Baby face and baby prattle  
Could not save him in that battle.  
Cruel Fate cut short his thread :  
Little Urbicus lies dead.  
May thy children happier be,  
And live on surviving thee.

\* XCVII

## *TO HIS BOOK*

LITTLE book, when to Caesius Sabinus you come,  
The bright shining star of his Umbrian home,  
With friend Aulus Pudens, his townsman so true,  
Even though he be busy he'll find time for you.  
A thousand distractions may fill him with care,  
But for my poor verses some hours he will spare ;  
For he loves to peruse them, and gives them their station  
Second only to Turnus in his estimation.  
What glory and fame you are going to win,  
How many a lover will call you within.  
Every banquet and market will echo your praise,  
Shops, houses, and porches, and little byways.  
You are sent to one man, but as soon as you're known,  
You'll be read, let me tell you, all over the town.

XCVIII

## *THE SPENDTHRIFT*

THERE'S nothing that you do not buy ? Ah well,  
Soon there'll be nothing that you do not sell.

\* XCIX

*TO CRISPINUS, DOMITIAN'S FAVOURITE*

So may you see the Thunderer always kind  
And Rome as loving as your Egypt find.  
If my poor books you in the Palace hear—  
For they are wont to amuse the Emperor's ear—  
Venture to say—as fits a candid friend—  
'He too some honour to this age doth lend.  
Not Marsus nor Catullus him outshine'  
'Twill be enough. I trust our Lord divine.



BOOK EIGHT





## BOOK EIGHT

### PREFACE

VALERIUS MARTIALIS to the EMPEROR DOMITIANUS CAESAR AUGUSTUS GERMANICUS DACICUS GREETING

*All these books of mine, Sir, to which you have given their reputation, that is, their life, are your devoted servants, and I have no doubt that for this reason they will be read. But this volume, which is the eighth of my collected works, enjoys, in a greater degree than did the others, opportunities to show its loyalty, for which cause I have had less occasion for skilled invention, seeing that the subject-matter compensated for lack of it, and yet I have tried to produce some variety of theme now and again by the intermixture of a light jest or so, lest every verse should force upon your angelic modesty the praises which are its due, a course which might more easily be wearisome to you than satisfying to myself.*

*Although epigrams written by the gravest persons and men of the highest rank have been so composed as to assume the loose language of mimes, yet I have not allowed these of mine to speak with such accustomed licence, for as part of the book, and that the larger and better part, is associated with the majesty of your sacred name, the work must need remember that only those made clean by solemn purification may come near the temples, and to the end that my readers may know that I shall keep this precept, I have resolved to make my declaration of it in quite a short epigram at the beginning of this volume.*



\* I

*PROPRIETY*

LEARN to be modest, book, and pure of speech,  
 Before the Emperor's laurelled halls you reach.  
 Go, naked Venus : here thou hast no place.  
 Our Caesar's Pallas shall these pages grace.

\* II

*LONG LIFE TO THE EMPEROR*

JANUS, father of the year,  
 Double-faced and many-eyed,  
 When he saw our victor near  
 Gazed on still unsatisfied.

' To your god and lord '—said he,  
 ' Four times Nestor's years I give.'—  
 One thing more we ask from thee :  
 Give him too thy life to live.

III

*THE NINTH MUSE*

' FIVE books had been enough ; a further pair  
 Are over many ; ere thy jesting pall,  
 Retire, my muse, for fame hath given her all,  
 And thou and I find welcome everywhere.

Thy tomb, Messalla, shall be overthrown,  
 To dust shall sink thy marbles, Licinus,  
 While nations yet to be shall cherish us  
 And bear our songs to motherlands unknown.'

'Twas thus I spake and scarce had done, when she  
 Who by the perfume of her floating hair  
 And fragrant robe made sweet the laden air,  
 She, the ninth muse, Thalia, answered me.

' Ingrate, wouldst leave thy quips to play the sage ?  
 Ah, sluggish bard, what more dost thou desire,  
 Wilt take the buskin for the sock, aspire  
 To thunder savage war in epic rage ?



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

So might some bawling pedant cite thee—one  
Whom generous youth and ripening maiden hate—  
On swelling themes let prigs and dullards prate  
Whose toil the midnight lamp sees yet undone.

Season with native salt thy merry lay,  
Show Rome her very self in word and deed,  
And so the piping of thy slender reed  
Shall sound when clarion blasts have died away.'

\* IV

### *TO DOMITIAN WITH THE NEW YEAR*

Lo, the whole universe performs her vow,  
And at thy altars makes her offering now.  
The joy of men, methinks, doth not suffice :  
The gods themselves to thee make sacrifice.

V

### *SQUANDERED WEALTH*

You spent so much on rings for many a fair one,  
That now, a Knight no more, you may not wear one.

\* VI

### *ANTIQUES*

OLD Auctus is really a terrible bore  
With his pedigree plate : I would rather he'd pour  
The wine from cheap ware, for he tells such a tale  
About every piece that the liquor goes stale—  
' Laomedon once owned this goblet, my boy :  
To get it Apollo with music built Troy.—  
With this cup fierce Rhoetus engaged in the fray,  
Against the Lapiths : it's still dented to-day—  
These beakers their value from Nestor derive,  
He rubbed that dove smooth with his hand when alive—  
In this bowl Achilles was wont for his friends  
To mix a strong dose of his choicest old blends—  
From this mug fair Dido did Bitias plight,  
When she gave the repast to Aeneas that night '—

So he goes on : each tankard of old Priam smacks ;  
But you'll find that the wine is young Astyanax.

## BOOK EIGHT

### VII

#### *A GIFT OF SILENCE*

YOUR skill, your eloquence, are vast indeed,  
One word an hour suffices you—or less ;  
Yet for extended time you loudly plead :  
How great your golden gift of speechlessness !

### \* VIII

#### *DOMITIAN'S RETURN*

THOUGH, Janus, you begin the flying year  
And ages long renew when you appear ;  
Though vows and incense first to you we pay,  
And consuls at your feet their offerings lay ;  
More joy is yours to know that in your time  
Our God returns to Rome from northern clime.

### IX

#### *A FAIR OFFER*

HYLAS, one quarter of his eyesight gone,  
Proposed to pay three quarters of your fee ;  
But now one eye is ruined, whereupon  
He says he'll pay you half : if you agree,  
Close with the offer quick ere worse befall,  
Or soon, stone-blind, he will not pay at all.

### X

#### *A BARGAIN*

HIS cloak is brand-new, the best Tyrian hue,  
He has got a good bargain I know.  
' Was it cheap ? ' do you say ? Well, of course, he won't pay,  
And what is ten thousand—to owe ?

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## \* XI

### *THE EMPEROR'S HOME-COMING*

RHINE knows that thou at last hast come to Rome,  
For our loud cheers reach even to his home.  
Sarmatian tribes and savage Getae fear,  
And Hister trembles at our shouts of cheer ;  
While in the Circus, homage once begun,  
No man perceived four races had been run.  
No chief has Rome so loved, nor thee of yore ;  
Now, though she wished, she cannot love thee more.

## XII

### *TO PRISCUS*

I MARRY wealth and be for life  
Naught save the husband of my wife ?  
Nay 'twere a galling tether.  
The man must rule, the wife obey,  
Priscus, there is no other way  
To make them pull together.

## XIII

### *THE GUARANTEE*

I BOUGHT him as a fool at vast expense ;  
Pay back the price, he shows a gleam of sense.

## \* XIV

### *GLASS-HOUSES*

LEST your trees should turn yellow and shrink from the cold  
Or too biting an air on their branches get hold,  
Glass casements face south, keeping chill winds away,  
And let in the sunlight and undefiled day :  
But my garret's window has just one cracked pane  
Where Boreas himself would not care to remain.  
Do you wish your old friend to stay there till he freeze ?  
I should be better off as the guest of your trees.

## \* XV

*DOMITIAN'S TRIUMPH*

PANNONIAN victories thy glory prove  
 And every altar greets returning Jove.  
 The Latin tribes their triple largess earn,  
 And people, knights, and senate incense burn.  
 Our loyal love thou takest, Sire, on trust,  
 And Rome conceals her triumphs ; for she must.  
 But thy peace-laurels all the brighter show :  
 A prince's virtue is his folk to know.

## XVI

*ON CYPERUS*

THOUGH long a baker, now you are  
 Seeking a fortune at the bar ;  
 Your gains are spent as soon as made,  
 You borrow too—the same old trade ;  
 Of old you made your bread : somehow  
 You still contrive to make it now.  
 And you will find that spendthrifts must  
 Like bakers seek to raise a crust.

## \* XVII

*THE MODEST ADVOCATE*

WE agreed that my fee should be twenty. Why then,  
 When the pleadings are over, now only send ten ?—  
 ' You scarce said a word, and you lost me my case '—  
 Nay, you owe all the more, if I blushed in your place.

## \* XVIII

*TO CERRINIUS*

IF once your verse to public knowledge came,  
 You soon would equal or surpass my fame.  
 But for your friend such love you've ever shown  
 That you prefer his glory to your own.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

So Virgil who might e'en with Pindar vie  
Ne'er against Flaccus sung in rivalry,  
And though he could have passed him in the race,  
In tragedy to Varius gave place.  
Full many a friend will give you wealth and fields ;  
But rare is he who thus in genius yields.

## XIX

### *FALSE APPEARANCES*

HE makes parade of poverty—a plot  
To make us think him rich when he is not.

## XX

### *THE WISE FOOL*

You write a hundred lines a day ?  
That means a crazy brain.  
And yet you publish none, you say ;  
That shows that you are sane.

## \* XXI

### *TO THE DAYSTAR ON THE MORNING OF DOMITIAN'S RETURN*

BRIGHT star, bring back the day : why check delight ?  
Our Caesar comes : bright star, bring back the light.  
Dost thou then ride with the slow-moving bear,  
Thou art so long the city's call to hear ?  
Castor to thee his flying steed would lend,  
That so the dawn thou might more quickly send.  
Why stay the sun ? His steeds are fain to take  
The bit, and Memnon's mother is awake.  
Nay, 'tis the moon that will not yield to day  
And with the stars would fain in heaven stay  
To see our chief. Sire, e'en in darkness come :  
Thy people need not light, if thou be home.

## XXII

*NATURAL HISTORY*

YOU said it was wild boar you gave me, Sir ;  
 'Twas but a farm-yard hog—you greatly err  
 Who think I can be cheated by a name ;  
 Only a mongrel mixes wild with tame.

## XXIII

*THE COOK*

BECAUSE I beat my cook who spoilt the dinner  
 You say ' Oh cruel wretch, oh greedy sinner,  
 Such penalties for greater faults are fit.'  
 What greater crime, I ask, can cooks commit ?

## XXIV

*TO DOMITIAN*

IF aught we ask, my modest book and I,  
 Grant it—we speak in no presumptuous tone,  
 Or suffer us to ask though thou deny ;  
 Incense and prayer offend not Jove on high,  
 Men fashion images in gold or stone,  
 Not gods ; 'tis worship gives them sanctity.

## \* XXV

*INDIFFERENCE*

ONLY once when I was ill  
 You on me compassion took  
 To look in ; so now I will  
 Often give you an ill look.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXVI

## *DOMITIAN'S CIRCUS GAMES*

THE Indian hunter by the Eastern mead,  
When pale he flies on his Hyrcanian steed,  
Sees not as many tigers as have come  
To-day, great Sire, to give delight to Rome.  
Your games outshine those victory spoils of yore  
That Bacchus once from Erythraea bore :  
For when dark India to his car did bow,  
A pair of tigers were for him enow.

XXVII

## *TO GAURUS*

You rich old fool, the gifts that toady gave  
Mean he would like to give one more—a grave.

\* XXVIII

## *ON THE GIFT OF A TOGA FROM PARTHENIUS*

SAY, gown, most welcome gift from learned friend,  
To what famed flock dost thou new glory lend ?  
Did the Apulian herbage for thee bloom  
Where once Phalanthus had his Spartan home  
And dark Galaesus with Calabrian tide  
Brings riches to the teeming country-side ?  
Dost come from many-mouthed Timarus' bank  
Whose waters Castor's noble charger drank,  
Or did my Spanish Baetis wash thee too  
When thou wert wool on some Hesperian ewe ?  
No Spartan dye thy whiteness might decrease,  
Nor was Miletus worthy of thy fleece,  
Than lilies and young privet brighter still  
And ivory on Tibur's glorious hill,  
Nor swan nor pigeon can compare with thee  
Nor pearls fished up from Erythraean sea.

Yet though his gift is fairer than the snow  
Parthenius is yet more fair, I trow.

No Babylonian robe could match with this  
 Though it were broidered by Semiramis,  
 Nor should I more the golden fleece admire  
 If Phryxus gave it me for my attire.  
 Oh how absurd my poor old cloak has grown,  
 Which I must wear with this palatial gown.

XXIX

*SHORT AND LONG*

Who writes a distich hopes to please  
 By brevity, the soul of wit ;  
 But if he fill a tome with these,  
 I pray you where's the benefit ?

\* XXX

*MUCIUS IN THE CIRCUS*

WHAT in our circus we count sport  
 Was glory once of noblest sort.  
 See in the blaze he thrusts his hand  
 And does the faltering fire command,  
 Spectator of the sacrifice,  
 Where his right arm may scarce suffice ;  
 For if the torture were not stayed  
 His left too in the fire were laid.  
 His crime I do not want to know,  
 To see that hand's for me enow.

XXXI

*FATHER'S RIGHT*

It throws a somewhat lurid light  
 Upon your private life  
 That you should crave the ' father's right '  
 When you have got a wife.

You tease the sovereign as a boon  
 To call you ' Sire of three ' ;  
 Go home, my friend, 'tis none too soon,  
 And cease your urgent plea.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

But you are qualified—and more,  
For in that distant home  
You'll find your wife has borne you four  
Whilst you were here in Rome.

\* XXXII

## *ARETULLA'S DOVE*

THROUGH the still air to Aretulla's breast  
A dove came gliding down and sank to rest.  
'Twas chance, you say: yet there the bird remained  
And from its proffered liberty refrained.  
It may be that a sister's pious love  
Avails the ruler of this world to move,  
And from Sardinia's shore, the exile's home,  
The dove with news of pardon now has come.

\* XXXIII

## *ON RECEIVING A PRESENT OF A VERY THIN METAL CUP*

A PIECE of gold leaf from your magistrate's crown  
You send me, and say—'A gold tankard write down.'  
It coated the floor of the stage, I should say,  
And by the red saffron was washed quite away.  
Or perhaps on the leg of your couch it appeared,  
Till a nail scraped it off, for 'twas only veneered.  
It shakes when a gnat in the distance goes by,  
And is moved by the wing of a small butterfly.  
The heat of a lamp makes it dance about neatly,  
And to dip it in wine would dissolve it completely.  
So those small nuts are coated which mean clients bring  
With a sixpence perhaps as New Year's offering.  
Bean tendrils are of thicker filaments spun,  
A lily's leaf coarser that fades in the sun.  
More dense stands the chalk on old Fabia's face,  
More dense are the bubbles upon a mill-race,  
More solid the fringe-nets that Roman girls wear,  
And the German pomade which dyes yellow their hair.  
A skin like to this has a chick still unhatched,  
And with spots so transparent our dandies go patched.  
Why send me a tankard? A ladle or spoon  
Would be surely sufficient—I'm speaking too soon:  
A nice little shell you my present might call,  
Or what is still cheaper—send nothing at all.

## XXXIV

*AN OLD MASTER*

A GENUINE ' old master ' this,  
 And it would be, as I infer,  
 An even more authentic Mys,  
 If you were not that master, Sir.

## XXXV

*DEPTH TO DEPTH*

It is very strange, as it seems to me,  
 That you and your wife should not agree,  
 Since each is as vile as vile can be.

## \* XXXVI

*ON DOMITIAN'S PALACE*

No longer now need foreign Memphis prate  
 Of her high pyramids and regal state.  
 How small a part of thy Palatial Hall,  
 Doth Egypt make, earth's fairest sight of all.  
 You'd fancy there the seven hills to espy  
 And Pelion on Ossa's not so high.  
 It pierces heaven, rising through the cloud,  
 And 'mid the stars its bright peaks thunder loud,  
 And take their fill of Phoebus' hidden light  
 Ere e'en Circeii has the sun in sight.  
 Yet though with heaven it may equal be,  
 It is not great enough, dear Sire, for thee.

## XXXVII

*TRUE KINDNESS*

You gave him back his bond, but why  
 Should you suppose you gave thereby  
 The money that was due ?  
 He owed the hundred pounds before ?  
 To please him lend him twenty more—  
 And keep the I O U.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXXVIII

## *TO MELIOR ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF BLAESUS' DEATH*

HE who with constant love doth gifts bestow  
On one who lives and can his kindness know,  
Perchance a legacy expects in turn ;  
But he who honours thus a funeral urn  
Shows the great gulf 'twixt goodness and pretence,  
For naught but solace hopes he from expense.  
Such is your gift, by rumour known to all,  
Who will not let the name of Blaesus fall  
To sheer oblivion, but with birthday feast  
After his death his glory have increased,  
And from rich purse the clerkly throng supply  
With funds to celebrate his memory.  
While life remains, this shall your tribute be ;  
And when you die this feast we still shall see.

\* XXXIX

## *ON DOMITIAN'S BANQUETING HALL*

TILL now there was no place that could contain  
Thy banquets, Sire ; no place where thou couldst drain  
The sacred nectar mixed by Ganymede :  
To-day thou hast the palace thou dost need.  
Long be it ere to Jove thou shalt ascend  
As guest : if he's in haste, let him descend.

XL

## *TO A STATUE OF PRIAPUS*

No vine I give, no orchard fair,  
Thou guardian god, to be thy care ;  
Naught but thy native copse—and there  
Are others like to thee.  
Warn off the thief, keep watch and ward,  
And save the trees to warm their lord,  
For if they fail—thou couldst afford  
At least one fire for me.

## XLI

*TWO SORROWS*

So he is ' sorry not to send  
 His New Year gift '—I wonder now  
 In what sense he's a sorry friend.  
 He makes me sorry anyhow.

## XLII

*TO MATHO*

SEEK you a richer patron ? Many do  
 For these can give them larger doles, it's true.  
 Yet mine will give a hundred baths to you :  
 The best of luxuries is cheapest too.

## XLIII

*DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND*

HE poisons wives, she husbands by the dozen,  
 With Pluto's torch the marriage-god they cozen  
 Unite them, Venus, in the marriage tether,  
 So death shall carry off the two together.

## \* XLIV

*TO TITULLUS*

LIVE, my Titullus, live. 'Tis still too late  
 In boyhood to begin ; and yet you wait  
 Though age has come, and waste the precious days  
 Cooling your heels attendant at levées.

Through the three forums where the mud spurts at you,  
 Past Mavors' shrine and great Augustus' statue,  
 We see you rush each morn from nine to noon  
 Wet with the slobberings of all the town.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Rob, plunder, hoard : your wealth you must resign.  
What though with yellow gold your coffers shine,  
And bulky ledgers tell of thousands lent !  
Your heir will swear you have not left a cent.

And when upon your bed of stone you lie,  
While paper-fed your funeral pyre burns high,  
Your mourning son will his sad loss assuage  
By taking the first night your favourite page.

## XLV

### *ON THE RETURN OF PRISCUS FROM SICILY*

My Priscus has returned from Aetna's shore,  
A milk-white pearl should mark the happy date ;  
Strain clear the wine—thy precious essence pour,  
Jar that hast known thy hundredth consulate.  
When shall my joyous board so celebrate  
A feast so dear, and warm my heart once more ?  
Not till the Cyprian goddess shall restore  
My Flaccus, shall I keep a feast so great.

## \* XLVI

### *TO CESTUS*

THOU whose young beauty is by virtue graced,  
Dear Cestus, than Hippolytus more chaste,  
Diana fain would have thee at her side  
To teach thee how to breast the rushing tide ;  
And Cybele would let her Atys go,  
On thee yet whole her favours to bestow ;  
Even to Jove thou couldst have given bliss,  
If thou hadst known to do aught else but kiss.  
Ah happy bride, who thee a man shall make,  
And in her arms a groom so tender take.

## XLVII

### *A TRIPLE CLIP*

PART of your beard is plucked away, part shorn, part clipped  
instead ;  
Who would believe me should I say you've but a single head ?

## BOOK EIGHT

\* XLVIII

### *A WARNING*

CRISPINUS was changing his dress yesterday  
And handed his cloak to a stranger, they say.  
Please return it, good sir, and we'll count it a joke :  
It is not Crispinus who asks, but the cloak.  
With commonplace wearers that stuff will not go,  
Its Syrian purple requires a beau.  
If you're just out for plunder and don't want it known,  
The next time you try, lay your hands on a gown.

\* XLIX

### *ON ASPER*

FOR beauty I'd reckon blind Asper's girl high :  
But it's plain that with him it's not lust of the eye.

\* L

### *ON DOMITIAN'S TRIUMPHAL BANQUET*

GREAT as the feast in heaven on that night,  
Which did proclaim the Giant's fallen might,  
When humble godlets could with Jove recline,  
And Fauns had leave to call on him for wine :  
So great thy victory banquet, Sire, to-day,  
When our rejoicings make e'en heaven gay.  
Knights, senate, people, all are welcome there,  
And with their chieftain taste ambrosial fare.  
How has thy looked-for largess been increased :  
A dole thou promised and hast given a feast.

\* LI

### *ON AN EMBOSSED BOWL*

WHENCE comes this bowl, by Mys or Myron made,  
By Mentor or by Polycleitus graded ?  
No leaden spots upon its surface stay,  
Nor cloudy mass that fears the fire's assay.  
Its golden ore more bright than amber gleams,  
Its frosted silver snow-white ivory seems.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And with like skill is the fair metal dight,  
Round as the moon in full refulgent light.  
A goat stands out arrayed in fleece of gold,  
Such as fair Hellë might have loved of old ;  
E'en a Cinyphian shearer would repine  
To shear his coat, and Bacchus give his vine.  
A golden love two-winged across him strides,  
And blithely pipes as on his back he rides,  
E'en as a dolphin once Arion bore,  
A vocal burden, to the further shore.  
No menial slave must fill this bowl with wine ;  
Cestus, the hand that bears it must be thine.  
Pour thou the nectar, gracious one ; for see  
Both goat and god are fain to drink with me :  
And let the giver's name its letters lend  
ISTANTI RUFU to the cups you blend.  
If Telethusa comes at this, love's hour,  
I'll keep myself for her and drink but four :  
If she is doubtful, then I'll toss off seven :  
But if she comes not, I'll have all eleven.

\* LII

### *THE LONG TASK*

I LENT my friend Rufus my barber, a boy  
As skilful as Thalamus, once Nero's toy,  
Who did the imperial family shave ;  
For my friend said he wished just one clipping to have.  
So the lad at his bidding cut off every hair,  
Rufus, mirror in hand, seeing that he took care ;  
And when he had finished with infinite pain,  
Was ordered to do it all over again.  
Indeed, that one head he so many times sheared,  
That when he came back he himself had a beard.

\* LIII

### *TO CATULLA*

FAIREST of beauties, now or long ago ;  
Vilest of wantons, long ago or now ;  
How oft I've wished, when I held you embraced,  
You were less beautiful or else more chaste.

## BOOK EIGHT

\* LIV

### *TO DOMITIAN*

GREAT are thy gifts and greater yet shall be—  
For thou alone, dear Sire, canst conquer thee.  
But 'tis not they that our affection move ;  
It is because of thee thy gifts we love.

\* LV

### *ON A LION SHOWN BY DOMITIAN IN THE CIRCUS*

FIERCE as the roar we hear in Afric lands  
When the wood raves with countless lion bands,  
And the pale shepherd to his Punic farm  
Calls back his bulls and sheep in dire alarm ;  
So in our Roman ring there echoed loud  
A monster, who but one yet seemed a crowd,  
So great, all lions would his empire own,  
And marble-decked Numidia yield the crown.

What glory to his neck his raised mane gave,  
Falling majestic in a golden wave !  
How that broad breast became our hunter's might ;  
What joy was his to die, Lord, in thy sight !  
Who to the Afric woods such glory lent ?  
Was he perchance from Cybele's chariot sent ?  
Or did thy brother or thy mighty sire  
Send down the beast from great Alcides' fire ?

\* LVI

### *PATRON AND POET*

THE days of our grandfathers to our own great times must  
yield  
And with her mighty Emperor Rome holds a wider field.  
Why is it then, you ask, that Virgils never now appear  
To sing of war and war's alarms in accents loud and clear ?  
Well, give me a Maecenas and I'll soon find you a Maro ;  
Perhaps on your own farm to-day some Virgil guides the  
harrow.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Young Tityrus in years gone by bewailed his plundered sheep,  
And fields by poor Cremona's side his father could not keep,  
Until at last the Tuscan knight dispelled his tearful grief  
And drove away grim poverty and gave him swift relief.

'Here's gold,' he said; 'enjoy it and become our greatest  
poet;

And love my fair Alexis too, if you would like to do it.'  
That lovely youth, as it would chance, was standing then at  
table,

Whose mouth ambrosial to tempt e'en Jupiter was able;  
And at the words he poured the dark Falernian rosy-lipped  
And gave the goblet to the guest wherefrom himself had  
sipped.

At once the enraptured bard forgot his sun-burnt Thestylis  
And stalwart Galatea for a more romantic bliss,  
And he who with 'The Gnat's Decease' in humble strains  
began,

Chanted the praise of Italy and sang the 'Arms and Man.'

Why should I tell of Varius and Marsus and the rest,

How many a singer has a patron's benefits confessed?

You say—'Were I Maecenas, then would you have Virgil's  
art?'

No, no: but I'm a Marsus and I well could play his part.

### \* LVII

#### DEAD MEN'S BONES

THREE teeth had Picens till one afternoon  
Beside the tomb where he'll be buried soon,  
He coughed them up and laid them there to rest,  
Last fragments of the set he once possessed.  
He's spared his heir one duty: that he owns:  
For he himself has gathered his own bones.

### LVIII

#### TO ARTEMIDORUS

My friend, although you take your name  
From Artemis, you cannot claim

She gave you such a cloak;

So rough and soldier-like is it;

Henceforward I shall call you 'Kit'—

'Tis just—a *Martial* joke!

## BOOK EIGHT

\* LIX

### *THE MASTER THIEF*

Do you see that old fellow with only one eye  
And beneath his rogue's brow a big black cavity ?  
Beware : he's a thief and a hard one to catch ;  
Autolycus even was scarcely his match.  
If he's ever your guest, watch him closely ; for then  
He revels in plunder and beats two-eyed men.  
Your slaves see the cups disappear with dismay,  
And ladles and napkins he tucks snug away,  
While even your mantle he draws from your arm  
And goes off himself with two cloaks nice and warm.  
If he sees a poor slave-boy asleep by the side  
Of his lamp, he will steal it : he's no proper pride.  
And if all else fail, lest his cunning he lose,  
He will stealthily filch from his man his own shoes.

LX

### *ON CLAUDIA*

'SHE's just of the Colossus' height,' say you ?  
Were she a cubit shorter, 'twould be true.

LXI

### *ON CHARINUS*

HE's pale with rage, to bursting he is nigh enough,  
With angry spite he cannot rave or cry enough,  
He'd hang himself on any bough that's high enough.  
'Tis not my world-wide fame that makes him furious,  
Nor my repute at home he holds injurious,  
Nor yet my scrolls in form and hue luxurious ;  
I have a little house—'tis no aspiring one,  
A summer cot, a modest and retiring one ;  
I buy the mules I ride, instead of hiring one ;  
Hence all this angry spite, what can one say for it ?  
What evil curses imprecate and pray for it ?  
Would my estate were his, then he should pay for it.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXII

## *A BAD OMEN*

You write on the back of your paper, 'tis wrong,  
A thing of ill omen to do ;  
For how can you wonder the genius of song  
Is turning his back upon you ?

\* LXIII

## *TO AULUS*

You are courting Alexis and Thestylus too,  
And my Hyacinthus you're ready to woo.  
You're a true poet-lover, of that there's no doubt,  
For a poet's pet fancy you always smell out.

\* LXIV

## *TO CLYTUS*

EIGHT times, Clytus, in each year  
Birthday gifts to you we bear.  
Every month save three or four  
Heralds in your natal hour.  
Though your cheeks may smoother be  
Then a stone worn by the sea,  
And your hair more black withal  
Than a mulberry ripe to fall ;  
Though you're softer far than down  
Or new cheese, and though you own  
Breasts as round and full as those  
Virgin brides keep for their spouse ;  
Yet to us you seem quite worn  
With old age, more often born  
Than King Priam was of yore  
Or the chief of Pylos' shore.  
Prithee, cease, this thievish play,  
In one year have one birthday.  
Or if you don't stop your fun  
I shall call you ' No man's son.'

## \* LXV

*DOMITIAN'S BIRTHPLACE*

HERE, where Returning Fortune's precincts shine,  
 Was erst the place where stood our lord divine,  
 Graced with the noble dust of northern fight  
 And shedding from his face refulgent light,  
 While Rome did greet her chief in white array  
 With voice and hand, her locks enwreathed with bay.  
 Great is its fame ; for here besides there stands  
 The arch triumphant over conquered lands,  
 With droves of elephants and chariots twain  
 Wherein our golden chief doth hold the rein.  
 This gate, true entry to the War-God's town  
 Befits thy triumphs, Sire ; so all men own.

## \* LXVI

*A NOBLE HOUSE*

INCENSE and victims to Augustus bring,  
 Ye Muses, for your Silius' offering.  
 Now Caesar, Rome's most sure and only ward,  
 Hath for our poet once again regard,  
 And bids the lictor strike upon his door  
 And the twelve axes to his son restore,  
 So that but one thing waits to crown his joy,  
 The happy purple for his second boy.  
 Though Pompey threefold office once obtained,  
 And great Agrippa triple honours gained,  
 Yet Silius thinks he the same fame has won  
 If Janus holds the name of either son.

## \* LXVII

*THE EARLY GUEST*

It is not yet eleven, and yet you have come  
 Prepared to dine with me in my humble home.  
 The courts have just finished the first morning session,  
 And at Flora's games now 'tis the hunter's procession.  
 Well, well ! Call the boys—they had gone up the town  
 To bathe—spread the couches : my dear friend, sit down.  
 ' Warm water '—you say : nay, the cold's not here yet,  
 The stove has gone out, and the kitchen's all wet.  
 Come another time sooner and don't till noon wait :  
 For dinner you're early, for breakfast you're late.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXVIII

## *TO ENTELLUS*

E'EN those who've seen Alcinöus' domains  
Prefer the country that your house contains.  
Lest jealous winter should the clusters sear  
And frost consume the gifts of Bacchus there,  
Your vineyard blooms 'neath a transparent lid,  
Its lucky grapes roofed over yet unhid.  
So shine a maiden's limbs through bombasine,  
So are the pebbles in clear water seen.  
What power will nature not allow to skill!  
You make grim winter to be autumn still.

LXIX

## *LAUDATOR TEMPORIS ACTI*

ALL save the ancient poets you decry,  
The living cannot gain your approbation ;  
Excuse me—'tis not worth my while to die,  
Even to earn your valued admiration.

LXX

## *TO NERVA*

GENTLE is Nerva, and his tongue doth shrink  
Too modestly to show her proper skill,  
And he that might have drained Permessus' rill  
Constrained his thirst and sipped the very brink ;  
And though his brow wear but a sprig of bay,  
And though he will not woo the breeze of fame,  
Yet him doth learned Nero's verse acclaim  
And greet him the Tibullus of to-day.

\* LXXI

## *TO POSTUMIANUS*

FOUR pounds' weight of silver ten winters ago  
You sent as my present, I'd have you to know.  
Next year I hoped more, or at least just the same,  
But to my disgust 'twas but two pounds that came.

## BOOK EIGHT

In the third and fourth years your gift still smaller grew,  
In the fifth 'twas one pound, and most common stuff too.  
The sixth dropped to a platter, eight ounces I found ;  
And then came a cup that weighed just half a pound.  
The eighth brought a ladle, two ounces or less,  
The ninth a thin tea-spoon, I blush to confess.  
You can't lower go in this tenth year, it's plain :  
So let's, if you please, start at four pounds again.

\* LXXII

*TO HIS BOOK, AN ADVANCE COPY FOR  
ARCANUS*

You are not yet with purple gay,  
Nor is your roughness smoothed away,  
But hasten, book, and catch my friend,  
Who now his distant way must wend  
To lovely Narbo and once more  
Take up his task of legal lore.  
You have indeed a happy lot,  
For now two joys at once you've got ;  
Both him and that fair town you'll view :  
Ah, how I wish that I were you !

\* LXXIII

*TO INSTANTIUS RUFUS*

INSTANTIUS, than whom no man more true  
Lives on this earth, no friend more sure than you ;  
If you would have my Muse true vigour prove,  
Give me, O give me something I can love.  
'Twas Cynthia made Propertius a poet ;  
Lycoris showed young Gallus how to do it ;  
From Nemesis Tibullus gained his name ;  
Through Lesbia Catullus rose to fame.  
And so with me : if some Corinna kind  
Or beautiful Alexis I could find,  
Even in Mantua my verse were known,  
And Ovid's folk would hail me as their own.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXXIV

### *ON A DOCTOR TURNED GLADIATOR*

A FIGHTER to-day and a doctor before,  
Time makes little change in your course.  
The force of your physic was fatal before,  
So now is your physical force !

## \* LXXV

### *DEAD GAULS*

A GAUL late one night, who had just come to Rome,  
Was making his way from the Colonnade home,  
When he caught his big toe and his ankle-bone sprained,  
And stretched at full length on the pavement remained.  
What was to be done ? He could not himself rise,  
And the one servant with him was so small in size  
That he scarcely a very light lantern could bear,  
And helplessly gazed at his lord lying there.  
Chance came to his aid ; for four slaves came along  
With a pauper's cheap corpse, one of that endless throng  
Who move to the burial-ground every day,  
And his man plucked up courage the bearers to stay—  
' Please stop : you may do what you like with the dead,  
If you'll take on your bier my fat master instead.'  
The loads were soon changed and the Gaul, lifted high,  
Made shift on the pauper's scant litter to lie.  
We might very well now sing the circus refrain,  
' You are dead, master Gaul '—over him once again.

## LXXVI

### *TO GALLICUS*

' PRAY tell me plainly what you think of it,'  
You always say, ' I love a frank report.'  
Thus when you read the products of your wit,  
Thus when you plead a client's case in court,  
You pester me a verdict to extort,  
And since a flat refusal seems uncouth  
Here is the truth you ask for, plain and short—  
That truth is that you do not want the truth.

## LXXVII

*TO LIBER*

IF friends could choose, so dearly loved art thou,  
 Liber, unfading roses should be thine,  
 Short-lived are ours, yet bind therewith thy brow,  
 And let thy locks with rarest unguents shine,  
 Crown high the cups with dark Falernian wine,  
 And follow love with all his dear delight ;  
 Though brief the span that grudging fates assign,  
 Joy thus may lengthen it in their despite.

## \* LXXVIII

*ON THE GAMES GIVEN BY STELLA IN  
 DOMITIAN'S HONOUR*

SUCH games as might the gods' own victory grace,  
 Or Bacchus celebrate with smiling face,  
 Now for thy northern triumph Stella gives  
 And still unworthy of his love believes.  
 For him suffice not Hermus' golden sands  
 Nor Tagus with the wealth of western lands.

Each day hath its own gift ; the bounteous cord  
 Rich plunder to the people doth afford.  
 Now sportive tokens fall in sudden cloud  
 And give the arena victims to the crowd :  
 Now birds, no longer mangled, come by lot  
 Unharm'd to those who have the ticket got.

Why should I tell of prizes three times ten,  
 Such as the consuls' games scarce give to men.  
 For there is one thing that surpasses all ;  
 Thou, Sire, art here to watch thy festival.

## LXXIX

*THE CONTRAST*

YOUR lady friends are ill to see,  
 All old or ugly as can be,  
 And in their company you go  
 To banquet, play, and portico ;  
 This hideous background you prepare  
 To seem, by contrast, young and fair.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXX

## *ON DOMITIAN'S REVIVAL OF PUGILISM*

THOU dost restore the wondrous days gone by,  
And suffer not the hoary past to die ;  
For in the circus now by our old rite  
Valour with simple strength of hand may fight.  
So 'neath thy rule we tend each ancient shrine,  
And worship Jove, yet hold the cot divine.  
New rites established, old revived, we see :  
What is, what was, alike we owe to thee.

\* LXXXI

## *ON GELLIA'S PEARLS*

NOT on the Mother's sacred vows,  
Not on Isis' bovine spouse,  
Not on any god at all,  
Gellia in her oaths doth call.  
It is by her pearls she swears,  
Kisses every one she wears,  
Fondles it and calls it brother,  
Sister : though she is a mother  
With two babes, she loves her pearls  
Better than she loves her girls ;  
Swears she could not live a day  
If her pearls were stol'n away.  
Would you lead the dame a dance ?  
Now, sir cracksman, here's your chance.

LXXXII

## *TO DOMITIAN*

WHILST others come thy grace to supplicate,  
My little wreath before thy throne I lay ;  
Lord, who canst tend the Muses and the state,  
So may my garland please thee—and I pray  
Uphold thy bards, they are thy glory, they  
Thy chief delight and care : for thy renown,  
Though decked with Saviour's oak or victor's bay,  
May we not weave our poet's ivy crown ?

BOOK NINE



## BOOK NINE

### PREFACE

*Hail, dear Toranius, brother most beloved. The epigram which is supernumerary to my book I wrote to Stertinius, a man of the highest rank who has expressed a wish to place a bust of me in his library. I thought it well to write to you about him that you might know who this Avitus is—Farewell and prepare to act the host.*

*Fame is your right, O noble soul,  
Though you reject your due  
Till Death, defying your control,  
Shall force the crown on you.  
Meantime may this quatrain I send  
Beneath my bust proclaim  
'Twas you that chose to set your friend  
With bards of noblest name.*

*Reader, I gained what I desired,  
The palm for lighter verse,  
And if you hold me not inspired  
You love me none the worse.  
Let others claim the epic rage,  
The seers of lofty dreams,  
While men unwearied con my page  
That trills on little themes.*





## \* I

*ON DOMITIAN'S TEMPLE*

WHILE Janus gives his name to winter's tide ;  
 While from Domitian autumn gains new pride,  
 As summer from Augustus ; while the day  
 Of the Germanic Kalends marks our sway  
 O'er conquered Rhine ; while Jove's rock-temple stands,  
 And matrons come with prayer and suppliant hands  
 Worship to pay to Julia divine ;  
 So long shall last the mighty Flavian shrine,  
 With sun and stars coeval and with Rome,  
 Work of unconquered hand, the heaven its home.

## II

*TO LUPUS*

ON us you've not a farthing to expend,  
 But oh, how generous to your lady friend !  
 On dainty cakes and pastries she is fed,  
 Your guest has only black and musty bread ;  
 For her iced wine is poured of vintage rare,  
 For him a muddy acid ordinaire ;  
 You sell a farm her favours to command  
 For one short hour ; your friend tills alien land.  
 She flaunts in priceless Orient pearls—and yet  
 Your client haled away is sold for debt ;  
 Eight Syrian slaves the minx's litter bear,  
 Your needy friend a pauper's bier will share :  
 Rhea, you choose the scum of all the nation,  
 Is he not worthy of—initiation ?

## \* III

*TO DOMITIAN*

WERE you, great Sire, from heaven to reclaim  
 All you have given, a creditor in name,  
 Though great Olympus were put up for sale  
 And the gods auctioned, naught would it avail—  
 Atlas would bankrupt go, nor Tonans get  
 A shilling in the pound to pay his debt.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

How could he settle for the Capitol  
Or for his shrine with oak-leaf garlands full ?  
Pallas I leave ; she shares with you, we know :  
But what must Juno for two temples owe ?  
And then the twins, Alcides and Apollo,  
The Flavian chapel—and there's more to follow.  
You must be patient, Sire, and wait your day :  
Jove's coffers lack the wherewithal to pay.

\* IV

### THE PRICE OF SECRECY

A COUPLE of pound hasn't much of a sound, but for everyday  
use it's enough ;  
If you want something more you will have to pay four and  
for that you get really hot stuff.  
Some people give ten, but the inference then is of black-  
mailers they are afraid,  
And betwixt you and me, as I think you'll agree, what they  
pay for is—' *Not a word said.*'

\* V

### TWO OF A TRADE

CLEVER Jenny wants to wed,  
Wants to marry Joe.  
Master Joseph shakes his head :  
Joe is clever too.

\* VI

### ON DOMITIAN'S REVIVAL OF THE LEX SCANTINIA

THEE, O world-father who with conquering sword  
The Rhine hast humbled, O most modest lord,  
The cities thank for people : in thy time  
To bring forth children is at last no crime.  
No boy, polluted by a pander's art,  
Mourns for his manhood now, no mother's heart  
Is wrung by grief when to her child she shows  
The pittance which the haughty pimp allows.  
The shame our marriage-beds had lost, by thee  
Even in brothels we begin to see.

## \* VII

*TO AFER*

Now you're home from your travels in lands far away,  
 For a week I've been wanting to bid you good-day.  
 'He's engaged,' 'he's asleep'; that has been my reply:  
 That's enough; if you won't have—'good-day,' here's—  
     'good-bye.'

## \* VIII

*ON DOMITIAN'S LAW PROTECTING CHILDREN*

As though, O shame, it did not him suffice  
 To prostitute our youths to venal vice,  
 The pander seized our cradles for his prey  
 And forced young babes to earn him shameful pay,  
 Till Rome's great father wrathful at the sight  
 Saved the poor children from their monstrous plight;  
 E'en as to youths he lately gave his aid  
 Lest they by cruel lust be sterile made.  
 Boys, youths, and elders loved thee, Sire, before:  
 Now infants too thy majesty adore.

## \* IX

*TO BITHYNICUS*

NOT a penny from Fabius, though every year,  
 Fifty pounds' worth of presents you gave!  
 Never mind: we are all in the same boat, I fear,  
 And in future that money you'll save.

## \* X

*TO CANTHARUS*

YOU'RE very glad with friends to dine,  
 Yet there you bawl, backbite, and blether.  
 Such ways, good sir, you'd best resign:  
 Free speech and greed go ill together.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XI

## TO DOMITIAN'S CUPBEARER EARINOS ( ' SPRINGBOY ' )

A NAME that's born with the primrose,  
Wherefrom the year its best part knows,  
Which draws from Attic flowers their scent  
And phoenix perfumes subtly blent,  
Sweeter than nectar's juice divine,  
Which, Atys, thou wouldst wish were thine,  
And he who holds for Jove his cup ;  
A name which in our court brings up  
Venus and Cupid to the call,  
Soft, delicate, and famed withal ;  
This in deft verse I fain would tell,  
But, stubborn syllable, you rebel.  
' Eiarinos ' the poets write ;  
But they are Greeks who may indite  
Whate'er they please and in their song  
Have Ares short and Ares long.  
We cannot such glib license use,  
For Romans court a sterner Muse.

\* XII

## TO THE SAME

IF I got my name from autumn, I Oporinos should be :  
Winter stars would give another, then Chimerinos you'd see :  
Therinos the months of summer would for me as title bring :  
Tell me now what you should call me when I take my name  
from Spring ?

\* XIII

## TO THE SAME

THOU hast a name which tells of vernal hours  
When Attic bees lay waste the short-lived flowers ;  
Which Venus with her pen would joy to write  
Or broider with soft silk and needle bright ;  
Which should be made with pearls from India's land  
Or amber balls warmed by a virgin's hand ;  
Which cranes with flying wing to heaven bear,  
And finds its rightful place with Caesar here.

## \* XIV

*ON A PARASITE*

Do you think that this man, whom your generous board  
 Has got you for friend, can true friendship afford ?  
 It's your oysters and mullet he loves, sir, not you :  
 If my dinners were good, he would be my friend too.

## \* XV

*A MUCH-MARRIED LADY*

CHLOE seven husbands had,  
 In the churchyard laid 'em,  
 On the stone the record sad,  
 All their names engraved 'em ;  
 Then added—' Chloë's work you see.'  
 O what delicious naïveté !

## \* XVI

*EARINOS' VOW*

HIS mirror, beauty's wisdom, and his hair  
 To Aesculapius an offering  
 The boy our lord most loves to-day doth bear,  
 Who by his name recalls the hours of spring.  
 Happy the land that is with such gifts fee'd :  
 For him we would not take e'en Ganymede.

## \* XVII

*ON THE SAME*

LATONA'S grandson, by whose potions mild  
 The Fates with too brief distaff are beguiled,  
 These locks, his lord's delight, thy boy sends now  
 To thee from Rome to pay his solemn vow,  
 And this bright glass has added to the hair  
 Whose verdict oft assured him he was fair.  
 Gone are his tresses bright ; yet none the less  
 Preserve for him his youthful comeliness.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XVIII

### *A PETITION TO THE EMPEROR*

WHILE Caesar reigns, long may my country cot  
And tiny house in Rome be mine ; but lo,  
Yon straining pole doth bring my garden-plot  
Its scanty waters from the vale below :  
But here, though nigh at hand the fountains flow  
No quickening drop doth slake my parching home ;  
One rill divine a bard would love to owe  
To him, the Muses' lord, the God of Rome.

## XIX

### *TO SABELLUS*

You praise the gourmet's baths ; do you design  
To share his water, or his food and wine ?

## \* XX

### *ON THE FLAVIAN TEMPLE, BUILT UPON THE SITE OF DOMITIAN'S BIRTHPLACE*

THIS open space, with marble and with gold  
Emblazoned, knew our infant lord of old.  
O happy earth, that heard his wailing cry,  
And as he crept could see and help supply.  
Here stood the house which to our world has given  
What Rhodes and pious Crete bestowed on heaven.  
Then eunuch priests the baby god concealed  
With all their strength, loud rattling lance on shield ;  
For thee, great Caesar, Jove himself had care,  
And bolt and aegis stood for shield and spear.

## XXI

### *LIVE UP TO YOUR NAME*

ARTEMIDORUS bought a pretty slave  
And sold his lands to pay—the price was great—  
But Calliodorus with the sum he gave  
Became the master of the whole estate.

Who bears the name of Artemis should'rate  
 Love at a price far meaner ; and its charm,  
 To him that's called from beauty, prove a bait  
 Much more alluring than a dirty farm.

## XXII

## TO PASTOR

FRIEND, if for larger wealth I seem to pine,  
 It is not as the vulgar herd desire it ;  
 They long that Rheims may toil to give them wine,  
 And slave-drive half a county to acquire it ;  
 They hunt for ormolu and Adams fine  
 Or gilded ' Empire ' stuff,—I don't admire it—  
 And quaff from crystals of the rarest sort  
 Dark draughts of richest Burgundy or Port.

The liveried menial lies beneath my ban,  
 I seek no crowd of fools to bow before me,  
 Let others keep the pampered serving-man,  
 To see a six-foot flunkey standing o'er me,  
 To drive a four-in-hand, or spick-and-span  
 To ride the Row—these things would simply bore me:  
 What do I want ? (may heaven upon me frown  
 If this is false.)—To beautify the town.

## \* XXIII

TO CARUS, ON A WREATHED BUST  
OF DOMITIAN

Martial: Tell me where now the golden garland lies  
 That Alban Pallas gave thee for thy prize.  
 Carus: See'st thou our master's face in marble wrought ?  
 To grace his locks my crown took wings unsought.  
 Martial: The pious oak may grudge the olive now  
 Its glory ; for it wreathes our victor's brow.

## \* XXIV

## ON THE SAME

WHO carved our master's bust from Latin stone  
 And so the Phidian ivory outshone ?  
 'Tis Jove's own face ; nay 'tis the world we see :  
 So the god thunders when from clouds he's free.  
 Athena gave thee more than that one crown ;  
 She too this worshipped image once did own.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXV

*TO AFER*

IF we gaze at your Hyllus as he passes by,  
You look at your guests with a most troubled eye.  
What crime is it in a fair boy to delight?  
Don't the sun and the gods and the stars please our sight?  
Shall I turn my eyes from him and hide my face up,  
As though 'twere a Gorgon presenting my cup.  
Even savage Alcides let Hylas be seen,  
And Ganymede sports with young Hermes, I ween.  
To your table you'd better blind Oedipus call,  
If you don't want your minions to be viewed at all.

XXVI

*TO NERVA*

SEND verse to Nerva? Nay, a bard so bold  
Might give cheap scent to Cosmus, hope to please  
Paestum with privet flowers or marigold,  
Send bitter honey to Hymettus' bees.  
Yet is there grace in humbler lines—for these  
Are olives taken after daintier cheer;  
Yet wonder not should my Thalia fear  
(Knowing her meaner power) your face to see;  
Did not a Nero dread your taste austere,  
Reading his merry verse? and so doth she.

XXVII

CUM depilatos, Chreste, colcos portas  
Et uulturino mentulam parem collo  
Et prostitutis leuius caput culis,  
Nec uiuat ullus in tuo pilus crure,  
Purgentque saeuae cana labra uolsellae,  
Curios Camillos Quintios Numas Ancos  
Et quidquid usquam legimus pilosorum  
Loqueris sonasque grandibus minax uerbis,  
Et cum theatris saeculoque rixaris.  
Occurrit aliquis inter ista si draucus  
Iam paedagogo liberatus et cuius  
Refibulauit turgidum faber penem,  
Nutu uocatum ducis, et pudet fari  
Catoniana, Chreste, quod facis lingua.

## \* XXVIII

*ON A BUST OF THE ACTOR LATINUS*

I AM Latinus, darling of the stage,  
 The applause, the pride, the wonder of my age,  
 Who could have wooed stern Cato to the play,  
 And made Fabricius laugh his cares away.  
 Naught from the theatre did my morals take,  
 And only in a farce was I a rake.  
 Virtue you need our master's grace to win ;  
 He is a god who sees the heart within.  
 ' A parasite of Phoebus '—as you will :  
 But let Rome know I served her great Jove still.

## XXIX

*ON AN OLD WOMAN'S GRAVE*

DEATH snatched you away before your day and took you to  
 Lethe's shore,  
 You could beat old Parr, but Methuselah might give you a  
 month or more.  
 What a voice to be dumb—it could overcome the market's  
 or schoolroom's clatter,  
 A revivalist hymn, or the river's brim with a million cranes  
 a-chatter.  
 There was none like you foul tricks to do, as a witch you have  
 left no double :  
 Be your covering slight and of sand so light that the dogs  
 may have little trouble.

## XXX

*ON THE DEATH OF RUSTICUS*

FOUL Asian coast, his life hast thou betrayed,  
 On thee by guilty waves his corpse was tossed.  
 Close in her breast his loving spouse conveyed  
 The sacred urn, too soon the seas were crossed,  
 Too soon those ashes in the earth she laid,  
 And seemed twice widowed of a love twice lost.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXXI

## *ON A PICTURE OF A VOTIVE OFFERING*

VELIUS, what time he hastened to the wars,  
For our great Caesar vowed a goose to Mars.  
The moon had scarce eight times in circle met  
When lo, the god claimed payment of the debt.  
The bird rejoicing to the altar came  
And fell a humble victim in the flame.  
See those eight coins that hang from out its beak :  
'Twould say—' For this I hid them '—could it speak.  
When victims thus with silver truth reveal,  
They show us, Sire, there is no need for steel.

\* XXXII

## *SIMPLICITY*

GIVE me the girl who's always willing,  
Who can suffice for lovers three,  
Whose price complete is just one shilling,  
Who gives my man what she gives me.  
Let Frenchmen in their arms enfold  
Fine ladies with their silks and all,  
They care for nothing else but gold,  
Give me the girl who wears a shawl.

\* XXXIII

## *THE WONDER*

IN the baths what is now the most pleasing diversion  
Is to go and see Maro displaying his person.

XXXIV

## *ON DOMITIAN'S TEMPLE*

THE King of Gods beheld our Flavian shrine  
And mocked his own on Ida for a cheat ;  
Deep were the cups he quaffed of nectar sweet,  
Ere for Rome's patron, Mars, he poured the wine.

Phoebus and Dian there he saw recline  
 By Hercules and duteous Mercury,  
 And said, 'Ye built my fane of old in Crete ;  
 But Caesar is more dutiful than ye.'

## XXXV

*THE NEWSMONGER*

THESE are the tricks that you devise to pay for hospitality,  
 You forge a hundred silly lies and state them as reality,  
 You know King Ferdinand's design discussed in far Bulgaria,  
 And what reserves are on the Rhine, their numbers in Bavaria,  
 Haig's last dispatches you have conned while still undried  
 the ink of them,  
 You see the victor laurels donned before the soldiers think of  
 them.  
 You tell the 'Tigris' rise in feet, and what the flood has meant  
 to us,  
 How many pounds of maize or meat America has sent to us.  
 The next Nobel awards you know, and all the facts that  
 guided them,  
 You give the winners' names although the Trust has not  
 decided them.  
 Give up this foolish fashion pray, you get but small regard  
 from it,  
 And if you grace my board to-day, remember 'News' is  
 barred from it.

## \* XXXVI

*TO EARINOS*

THE Phrygian youth, delight of the other Jove,  
 Had seen our Emperor's darling from above  
 With hair new-shorn, and cried, 'Great ruler, now  
 Grant me what Caesar doth his boy allow.  
 Down's on my cheeks concealed beneath these locks,  
 And Juno calls me man and jeers and mocks.'  
 To him—'My sweetest boy,' the Sire replied,  
 'Your wish by facts and not by me is denied.  
 Our Caesar has a thousand boys like thee ;  
 His palace scarce can hold their company.  
 But if shorn hair should give thee a man's face,  
 I should have no one left my board to grace.'



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXVII

*TO GALLA*

WHILST in your room you deck your beauty bright,  
Next door the coiffeur braids your lovely hair,  
Your frocks and teeth are laid away at night,  
So portioned out in boxes here and there  
You lie, and your complexion sleeps elsewhere ;  
Beneath a brow, remodelled day by day,  
Your eye still ogles men. Be reverent, pray,  
Nor hawk about each prehistoric charm :  
Though love is dull and dim of sight they say,  
He sees you well enough to take alarm.

\* XXXVIII

*ON A BOY JUGGLING WITH A SHIELD*

You play, Agathinus, a most risky game,  
But you can't get your buckler to fall all the same ;  
When you shun it, it follows, returning through air,  
And lights on your finger-tips, foot, back, or hair.  
The stage may be wet with the red saffron rain,  
And the boisterous wind make all awnings seem vain,  
But unheeded it runs o'er the boy's careless limbs  
Not baffled by showers or the breeze's mad whims.  
Though you try to go wrong you can't do it at all ;  
It will need all your skill if the shield is to fall.

XXXIX

*ON CAESONIA'S BIRTHDAY*

RHEA, thou shouldst have chosen for thy son  
This day that saw our lord of Thunder's birth  
And sweet Caesonia's. In all the earth  
Is none that owes her mother more and none  
More glad than he, her Sire, to bless the morn  
Whereon his Caesar and his child were born.

\* XL

## NUPTIAL FAVOURS

WHEN Diodorus sailed from Egypt's shore  
 His prize to take at Rome, Philaenis swore,  
 If he returned, she'd give him that sweet kiss  
 Which even Sabine matrons know is bliss.  
 His ship was wrecked, but through the raging main  
 He swam to land her promise to obtain.  
 Yet even so he seems a laggard spouse :  
 I'd ne'er embark if my girl made such vows.

XLI

PONTICE, quod numquam futuis, sed paelice laeua  
 Uteris et Veneri seruit amica manus,  
 Hoc nihil esse putas ? Scelus est, mihi crede, sed ingens,  
 Quantum uix animo concipis ipse tuo.  
 Nempe semel futuit, generaret Horatius ut tres ;  
 Mars semel, ut geminos Ilia casta daret.  
 Omnia perdiderat si masturbatus uterque  
 Mandasset manibus gaudia foeda suis.  
 Ipsam crede tibi naturam dicere rerum  
 ' Istud quod digitis, Pontice, perdis, homo est.'

XLII

FOR STELLA, THAT HE MAY GAIN THE  
CONSULSHIP

FOR ever may Myrina's wealth be thine,  
 Phoebus, and swan-song give thee joy divine,  
 The Muses do thy will in loyal truth,  
 Thy Pythian priestess ever say thy sooth,  
 And may the Palace—glory far above  
 These lesser joys—still worship thee and love,  
 If thou wilt ask and Caesar grant thy plea,  
 The fasces for my Stella ; then to thee  
 Will I, thy debtor, build an altar fair  
 With rustic greenery, and offer there  
 A yearling steer bedecked with gilded horn ;  
 Delay no more, he is already born.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLIII

## *ON A STATUETTE OF HERCULES*

THIS mighty god in shape of bronze so small,  
Whose lion's skin upon the stones doth fall,  
While to the stars he looks with upturned face  
Holding in either hand a cup and mace,  
No Roman work or fresh in fame is he,  
Lysippus' gift and handicraft you see.  
This god the board of Pella's monarch showed  
Ere death came quickly in the world subdued ;  
By him young Hannibal at the altars swore ;  
He bade fierce Sulla to lay down his power.  
Now from the threats of courts he holds aloof  
And gladly dwells beneath a private roof,  
And as of old he was Molorchus' guest,  
So now the god with Vindex loves to rest.

XLIV

## *ON THE SAME*

YOU know the Hercules that Vindex bought,  
So fair is he that once I asked the god  
Whose chisel, thus inspired, the statue wrought ;  
He laughed—that is his wont—and with a nod  
Towards the base ; ' Knowst thou not Greek ? ' says he,  
' And thou a bard ? His name yon letters tell ! '  
They said ' Lysippus ' or my thought should be  
That none but Pheidias could have wrought so well.

\* XLV

## *TO MARCELLINUS IN THE CAUCASUS*

A SOLDIER you have borne the Getic sky,  
And watched the sluggish Wain with careful eye,  
But now you travel further from us still  
Even to Prometheus and his storied hill.  
How will you cry when those grim rocks you see,  
Whereon he suffered—' Yet more hard was he.'  
And then will add—' Who could such pains endure,  
Was fit to mould the race of man, be sure.'

## XLVI

*THE MISER'S EXCUSE*

WHAT is the use of Gellius saying  
 That he is building when he's laying  
 Door-mats or fitting keys and latches  
 Or changing window-panes and catches ?  
 Can any reason lie behind it ?  
 Ask for a loan and you will find it ;  
 It is the best of all excuses ;  
 To say ' I'm building ' has its uses.

## XLVII

DEMOCRITOS, Zenonas inexplicitosque Platonas  
 Quidquid et hirsutis squallet imaginibus,  
 Sic quasi Pythagorae loqueris successor et heres ;  
 Praependet sane nec tibi barba minor :  
 Sed, quod et hircosis serum est et turpe pilosis,  
 In molli rigidam clune libenter habes.  
 Tu, qui sectarum causas et pondera nosti,  
 Dic mihi, percidi, Pannyche, dogma quod est ?

## XLVIII

*TO GARRICUS*

A QUARTER of your goods you vowed to leave me,  
 And swore by all the gods you'd not deceive me ;  
 I thought you speaking truly when you said it,—  
 For who would doubt what he desires to credit ?—  
 So sent you gifts to foster your intentions ;  
 Amongst them was a boar of huge dimensions  
 Like Meleager's. Half the town you fêted  
 Till even greediest epicures were sated ;  
 Yet—who'd believe it ?—I was not invited,  
 No scraps of ribs or tail my gift requited ;  
 If not one single ounce of pig I merit,  
 What of the pounds I hoped I might inherit ?



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LVI

## *THE VOYAGE*

SPENDOPHORUS must on his lord attend  
And soon to Libya his way will wend.  
Give him, dear Love, a wand and those soft darts  
Wherewith thou woundest eager lovers' hearts.  
Cuirass and shield and helm I leave to thee,  
He will be safe if naked he shall be,  
E'en as Parthenopaeus felt no blow  
From foemen's dart while they could see his brow.  
But whomsoe'er he pierces straight will die  
Of love—how happy in death's agony !  
O beauty bright, from Africa come home  
And grow to manhood here with us in Rome.

\* LVII

## *COMPARISONS*

THERE is nothing worn smoother than Hedylus' cloak :  
Not the neck of a mule that has long known the yoke,  
Not the handle of some old Corinthian jar,  
Not the ramshackle wheel of a slow-moving car,  
Not the leg that for ten years a fetter has borne,  
Not the hoe that long usage in vineyards has worn,  
Not pebbles nor ruts on our northern highway,  
Not a pauper's wan toga who's seen his last day,  
Not a bison's posterior scraped by the cage,  
Not the tusk of a boar savage in his old age ;  
Yes, there is just one thing : and he will not deny it ;  
The place where he sits on's more smooth, if you try it.

LVIII

## *ON A LAKE TEMPLE BUILT BY SABINUS*

QUEEN of the hallowed lake, with pious care  
Sabinus built thy fane that shall endure,  
And long may Umbrian hillmen worship there,  
Thy townsmen never yield to Baiae's lure ;  
If these my timid books thy favour share  
My Muse shall greet thee as her fountain pure.  
Say'st thou, ' who gives his book to nymphs to keep  
Must own their proper grave is in the deep ' ?

## LIX

*A GOOD CUSTOMER*

ABOUT the Saepta shops Mamurra strolled  
 Where opulence may squander wealth untold,  
 And first he viewed fair slaves with gloating eyes,  
 Not those an open shop will advertise,  
 No, but the kind reserved for private view  
 Unseen by common folk like me and you ;  
 He then stripped table-tops of antique make  
 And ivories kept aloft for safety's sake.  
 That couch of tortoise-shell inlay was small  
 And would not fit his citron board at all ;  
 He tried Corinthian bronzes by their scent,  
 Thought Polycleitus' work indifferent,  
 And said the crystal vase was flawed—the two  
 Of agate he would mark, for they might do ;  
 Some bowls and ancient cups he took and weighed  
 As perfect gems as Mentor ever made,  
 Appraised the emeralds in enamel clear  
 And pearl-drops made to deck some snow-white ear,  
 Hunted for sardonyx through half the town  
 And tried to beat the price of jaspers down.  
 Then tired at nightfall, having ransacked Rome,  
 He bought two farthing crocks and took them home.

## \* LX

*WITH A PRESENT OF FLOWERS*

BRIGHT garland, whether you from Paestum come,  
 Or Tibur or Praeneste is your home ;  
 Whether rich Tusculum your blossoms yields,  
 Or you give fame to fair Campanian fields ;  
 That for Sabinus you may have more charm,  
 Pretend you come from my Nomentan farm.

## \* LXI

*ON A PLANE-TREE PLANTED BY  
 JULIUS CAESAR IN SPAIN*

IN far Tartessus stands a house renowned,  
 Where rich Corduba Baetis woos in peace  
 And western sheep with living gold are crowned  
 Whose native ore makes pale the yellow fleece.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Within its midst is mighty Caesar's plane  
Which as a shoot by his own hand was given.  
It seems to know from whom its life began ;  
So green it grows, so high it springs to heaven.

Oft drunken fauns have sported in its shade  
And with their piping roused the house to fear,  
Oft have its boughs concealed a Dryad maid  
Who felt that Pan was in the darkness near.

The scent of Bacchic revels too it knows,  
And thick have grown its leaves from spilth of wine,  
While from red garlands fell the scattered rose,  
And none could say of any bloom—' 'Twas mine.'

O dear to heaven, mighty Caesar's tree,  
Fear not the fire, the sacrilegious knife ;  
It was not Pompey's hand that planted thee,  
Thy honours shall enjoy eternal life.

### LXII

#### *ON PHILAENIS*

SHE flaunts in garments Tyrian dyed  
By day and night as well,  
'Tis not extravagance or pride,  
Oh no—she likes the smell.

### LXIII

#### *ON PHOEBUS*

'Tis strange that Phoebus dines night after night  
With knaves whose deeds could never bear the light !

### \* LXIV

#### *ON THE TEMPLE OF HERCULES-DOMITIAN*

OUR Caesar deigns to take Alcides' face  
And with new shrine the Latin Road to grace,  
Just where the traveller to Diana's home  
Sees by the stone he is eight miles from Rome.  
Here Hercules with vows and victims' blood  
Was worshipped once : now there's a greater god  
Whom men beseech for rank and wealth each day,  
And from the other only trifles pray.

\* LXV

*ON THE SAME*

ALCIDES, now as our fair Caesar seen,  
 Most welcome to the Latin Jove, I ween,  
 If such had been thy visage in men's sight  
 What time the monsters yielded to thy might,  
 They had not seen thee bear thy cruel thrall,  
 Nor as a slave to Argive monarch fall.  
 Ne'er hadst thou wool for Omphalë unwound,  
 Or viewed the Styx and the Tartarean hound ;  
 Eurystheus would have bowed to thy behest,  
 Nor Lichas brought the Centaur's guileful vest ;  
 Unvexed by Oeta thou hadst reached the heaven  
 Which by the pyre at last to thee was given.  
 Now Juno smiles, fair Hebe's love is thine,  
 And Nymphs before thee blush for their rapine.

LXVI

*TO FABULLUS*

ALTHOUGH your wife is young and fair,  
 You want a father's right to share,  
     And that by legal fiction ;  
 But what you want of Caesar might  
 Be yours of ordinary right  
     Beyond all contradiction.

LXVII

LASCIUAM tota possedi nocte puellam,  
     Cuius nequitas uincere nulla potest.  
 Fessus mille modis illud puerile poposci :  
     Ante preces totas primaque uerba dedit.  
 Inprobius quiddam ridensque rubensque rogauit :  
     Pollicitast nulla luxuriosa mora.  
 Sed mihi pura fuit ; tibi non erit, Aeschyle, si uis  
     Accipere hoc munus condicione mala.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXVIII

### *TO A SCHOOLMASTER*

ACCURSED Pedagogue, why plague me so ?  
Your girls and boys abhor you—and no wonder—  
Before the crested cocks begin to crow  
Your savage howls and blows resound like thunder.

The clanging figure noisy blacksmiths fit  
On a bronze horse with rivet and with hammer,  
The howling mob that greets the favourite  
In the arena cannot match your clamour.

A broken night is naught : to lie awake  
The whole night through is really appalling ;  
Shut up the school or tell me if you'll take  
As much for silence as you get for bawling.

## LXIX

CUM futuis, Polycharme, soles in fine cacare.  
Cum pedicaris, quid, Polycharme, facis ?

## LXX

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

OF old ' O Times, O Manners,' Tully cried,  
In Catiline's foul days with treason rife,  
When swords were red with parricidal strife,  
And mourning Rome with civic blood was dyed.  
Why mock our times to-day, and why deride  
Our manners ? Is not ours a happy life  
That fears nor maddened chief nor murderous knife ?  
No degradation this our age doth rue,  
No leprous taint of shame—excepting you.

## \* LXXI

### *A STRANGE PARTNERSHIP*

AN African lion has partner become  
With a jolly old ram, and they live in one home.  
You may see them yourself, for together they're tied  
And like trusty friends take their meals side by side.

They don't feed on acorns, nor does grass suffice ;  
 A tender young lamb seems to both very nice.  
 The Nemean terror and Hellë's old ram  
 Compared with these two were a fraud and a sham.  
 If a place in the stars should to creatures be given,  
 Our goat and our lion are worthy of heaven.

## LXXII

*TO THE BOXER LIBER*

A CHAMPION in the craft that Pollux knew,  
 A Greek in skill, Roman in might and thew,  
 You share the name of Bacchus—yet 'tis true  
 That in the basket I received from you  
 No jar I found the viands to bedew  
 Of—you know what—your name should give the clue.

## \* LXXIII

*ON A PARVENU COBBLER*

WITH your teeth you were wont on old leather to bite,  
 And stretch out a sole that was mud-rotten quite,  
 But now you have got your dead patron's estate,  
 Who did not possess e'en a garret of late,  
 And in his bright crystal your hot drink enjoy  
 While you wanton at ease with his favourite boy.  
 Oh what a mistake that my fond parents taught  
 Me my letters, and tutors and schoolmasters sought !  
 If these are the profits from mending old shoes,  
 Good-bye books and pens, and adieu to the Muse.

## LXXIV

*ON A PORTRAIT OF CAMONIUS*

HERE may we trace the aspect that he wore  
 In childhood's hour, the bud but not the flower ;  
 His sire forbore to paint his manhood's grace,  
 Lest evermore grief should renew her power  
 Standing before that loved and silent face.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXVIII

### *TO A SCHOOLMASTER*

ACCURSED Pedagogue, why plague me so ?  
Your girls and boys abhor you—and no wonder—  
Before the crested cocks begin to crow  
Your savage howls and blows resound like thunder.

The clanging figure noisy blacksmiths fit  
On a bronze horse with rivet and with hammer,  
The howling mob that greets the favourite  
In the arena cannot match your clamour.

A broken night is naught : to lie awake  
The whole night through is really appalling ;  
Shut up the school or tell me if you'll take  
As much for silence as you get for bawling.

## LXIX

CUM futuis, Polycharme, soles in fine cacare.  
Cum pedicaris, quid, Polycharme, facis ?

## LXX

### *TO CAECILIANUS*

OF old ' O Times, O Manners,' Tully cried,  
In Catiline's foul days with treason rife,  
When swords were red with parricidal strife,  
And mourning Rome with civic blood was dyed.  
Why mock our times to-day, and why deride  
Our manners ? Is not ours a happy life  
That fears nor maddened chief nor murderous knife ?  
No degradation this our age doth rue,  
No leprous taint of shame—excepting you.

## \* LXXI

### *A STRANGE PARTNERSHIP*

AN African lion has partner become  
With a jolly old ram, and they live in one home.  
You may see them yourself, for together they're tied  
And like trusty friends take their meals side by side.

They don't feed on acorns, nor does grass suffice ;  
 A tender young lamb seems to both very nice.  
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 Compared with these two were a fraud and a sham.  
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# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXV

## *ON TUCCA'S BATH*

No flint, no ashlar, here are seen,  
No brick like that wherewith her Queen  
    Built Babylon's great wall ;  
It is of timber, planks, and lath,  
This cooling room in Tucca's bath  
    That is not cool at all ;  
So closely all the timbers fit  
That if he chose to sail in it  
    'Twould make a perfect boat.  
The hot room's rich with pillars wrought  
By Phrygian quarrymen or brought  
    From Afric lands remote,  
Though Sparta sent her marbles rare,  
Though rich Euboea's gems are there  
    Perfect in hue and form,  
'Tis always chill that marble tomb ;  
O Tucca, use the cooling room  
    To make the hot one warm.

\* LXXVI

## *ON A PICTURE OF CAMONIUS IN CHILDHOOD*

BEHOLD, the young Camonius you see  
As when he sported in his infancy.  
In twenty years his face had manlier grown  
And his fair cheeks were shadowed by a down  
Whose darkness just had felt the barber's knife,  
When jealous fate cut short his thin-spun life.  
Far, far away he died ; and to his sire  
Only came ashes from the funeral pyre.  
So while this picture gives his childish face,  
A later image in these lines I trace.

LXXVII

## *MUSIC WITH MEALS*

PRISCUS describes with learned zest  
The sort of feast he holds the best  
In pages full of interest  
    And erudition ;

But, if you ask my private view,  
 The best of all is that where you  
 Are not required to listen to  
     A damned musician.

LXXVIII

*ON PICENTINUS' MARRIAGE WITH GALLA*

SEVEN husbands she got,  
 Made away with the lot,  
     And has buried them all—but I know  
 That as you're number eight,  
 She has not long to wait  
     Before she rejoins them—below.

\* LXXIX

*ON DOMITIAN'S HOUSEHOLD*

THE servants once who stood at Caesar's board  
 In the proud palace were by Rome abhorred.  
 But now your men to all, Sire, are so dear  
 That our own households are our second care ;  
 So deferential are they and so kind,  
 Such modest calm in every face we find.  
 Each page takes pattern by his master's ways  
 And not his own, but Caesar's, mood displays.

\* LXXX

*A BAD BARGAIN*

POOR John in his youth was so very sharp-set,  
 He married a grand dame for what he could get.  
 To-day he discovers there's plenty to do ;  
 For he has both to feed her and fondle her too.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXXI

## *ON AN ENVIOUS RIVAL*

'UNPOLISHED'—so that scribbler sneers,  
While he that reads and he that hears,  
Approve my little books ;  
I do not care a single jot,  
My fame is for my guests and not  
To please my rival cooks.

\* LXXXII

## *A QUICK END*

AN astrologer said that you would not last long,  
And I really imagine he was not far wrong,  
For, wishing to leave not one penny behind,  
In a year you have thrown your estate to the wind ;  
A very nice fortune you've managed to spend,  
So I think we may say that you've had a quick end.

LXXXIII

## *ON A REFORM OF DOMITIAN'S*

FAIR were the pageants given in days of yore,  
To Caesar owe we deeper obligations ;  
Our eyes confess they owe him much, far more  
Our grateful ears—he banned the recitations !

\* LXXXIV

## *TO NORBANUS*

WHILE for our lord with loyalty unstained  
The rage of lawless foemen you restrained,  
I who your love have e'er my glory made,  
Was sporting safely in the Muses' shade.  
But when to Rhaetia my poems came,  
And the far north was busy with my name,  
Never did you our friendship then deny  
But ' He's my own, my comrade,' oft would cry.  
Soon may the author read to your kind ears  
All you have heard about in these six years.

## LXXXV

*THE SICK HOST*

HE is ill he states,  
 But he violates  
     All medical orthodoxy,  
 And so to atone  
 He gorges alone  
     And fasts as it were by proxy.  
 On the evidence  
 It is all pretence,  
     So quickly the illness rose up ;  
 But I see it quite  
 In a serious light,  
     For my dinner has turned its toes up !

## \* LXXXVI

*ON THE DEATH OF SEVERUS*

WHEN Silius, twofold lord of Latin tongue,  
 The fate untimely of Severus sung,  
 I to the Muses made my mournful cry  
 And thus did great Apollo give reply—  
 ‘ I wept for Linus, and Calliopë  
 Who stands hard by, has borne like grief with me.  
 Yea, cruel Fate has ventured e’en to move  
 With bitter grief the heart of either Jove,  
 The Thunderer in his Tarpeian shrine  
 And the great dweller on the Palatine.  
 Since then e’en they to fate relentless bow,  
 Forbear to charge the gods with envy now.’

## LXXXVII

*TO LUPERCUS*

SEVEN goblets of Opimian, a bumper full was each,  
 I quaffed, and that will make a man a trifle thick of speech.  
 You chose this hour to come and say, ‘ My Nasta I have freed,  
 He was my father’s servant, pray just sign and seal the deed.’  
 My seal is busy ; if you call to-morrow ’twill be right,  
 The seal upon a cork is all that it can mark to-night.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXXVIII

## *THE BREAKING-POINT*

YOU used to send me gifts, now having won  
My favour, as you think, you send me none ;  
'Tis best to feed a captive now and then,  
The boar ill-fed is like to force his den.

\* LXXXIX

## *TO STELLA*

YOUR guests must write you rhymes  
Before they may fall to ;  
It's very hard sometimes—  
' Well, any stuff will do.'

XC

## *TO FLACCUS*

IN flowery meadows may you lie  
With pebbly streamlets rippling by  
Whose banks with blossoms are aglow ;  
No care or sorrow may you know.  
Cool be your cups of mellow wine  
And sweet the chaplets that you twine.  
Yours be a love who's all your own,  
A maid who pines for you alone.  
This, Flaccus, is mine earnest prayer,  
But, friend, shun Cyprus and her glare  
What time they thresh the parching grain  
And flame doth glow in Leo's mane.  
O Paphian Queen, my wish fulfil,  
Restore the youth untouched of ill,  
So hallowed shall thy Kalends be  
And many a cake be offered thee  
With gifts of frankincense and wine  
Poured out before thy gleaming shrine.

\* XCI

## ON DOMITIAN'S BANQUETING-HALL

IF I were called to diverse feasts above,  
 This way by Caesar and that way by Jove,  
 Though heaven were near, the palace far away,  
 These were the words that to the gods I'd say—  
 ' Seek some one else to be the Thunderer's guest.  
 I have my Jove on earth : *je suis, je reste.*'

XCII

## TRUE SERVITUDE

' How easy live the free,' you say, and brood  
 Upon your long but easy servitude.  
 See Gaius tossing on his downy bed ;  
 Your sleep's unbroken tho' the couch be rude ;  
 He pays his call ere chilly dawn be red,  
 You need not call on him, you sleep instead ;  
 He's deep in debt, hears many a summons grim  
 From creditors that you need never dread,  
 You might be tortured at your master's whim ;  
 Far worse the gout that racks his every limb ;  
 Think of the morning qualms, his vicious moods,  
 Would you for thrice his freedom change with him ?

XCIII

## A TOAST TO DOMITIAN

POUR out six measures from the older cask ;  
 Why dally so ? Nay, pour the deathless wine.  
 ' What holy name has letters six, you ask,  
 Save Caesar ' ? Aye my thought you can divine ;  
 So in my wreath ten lovely roses twine  
 For him the builder of the Flavian fane  
 And give me kisses ten to be a sign  
 That as a god Sarmaticus doth reign.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XCIV

## *TO A DOCTOR*

To me 'tis filthy strychnine you dispense,  
Then ask for wine! Why, damn your impudence!  
In Homer, Glaucus for a crazy whim  
Exchanges gold for bronze—am I like him?  
Give a sweet draught to you and take instead  
That bitter stuff? The fool is off his head.  
Well take it then—but ere you drink it up  
Pour a stiff dose of bromide in the cup!

\* XCV (A)

## *ON A BACHELOR NEWLY WED*

WHEN Algernon Brown was a bachelor gay  
He was put by the girls at the top of class A;  
But his value has sadly decreased since he wed,  
And now he appears at the bottom of Z.

\* XCV (B)

## *ON THE SAME*

You ask—'Has he any real name of his own,  
This person you call Mr Algernon Brown'?  
I'm damned if I know: call him Brown, my dear fellows:  
I can't bear the blame of your friend's peccadilloes.

\* XCVI

## *ON A DOCTOR*

DOCTOR HEROD when caught with a cup in his pocket  
Said—'Wine does you harm; if you're wise, you will dock it.'

## XCVII

*JEALOUSY*

WITH jealousy he's like to burst—  
 What have I done to rouse him so—  
 Until he cracks with rage accurst ?  
 Rome reads my books—that is the worst  
 Of all offence to him—and lo !  
 With jealousy he's like to burst ;  
 But other grudges he has nursed,  
 I'm pointed out in street and show  
 Until he cracks with rage accurst  
 Because the grant is not reversed  
 That Titus gave me long ago.  
 With jealousy he's like to burst,  
 Not yet my crimes are all rehearsed ;  
 My house and farm annoy my foe  
 Until he cracks with rage accurst ;  
 He'd ban my friendships if he durst ;  
 My dinners give him bitter woe ;  
 With jealousy he's like to burst.  
 Men love me, spite has not aspersed  
 My fame—that makes his gall to flow  
 Until he cracks with rage accurst ;  
 He's near to bursting—*let him burst !*

## XCVIII

*THE LAST RESOURCE*

ALL round the vintage failed ; upon the trade  
 Ruin marched quick—the saving rain yet quicker :  
 Logwood and Company I hear have made  
 A hundred hogsheads of their usual liquor.

## \* XCIX

*TO ATTICUS*

ANTONIUS loves my humble verses, friend,  
 If to his letter we may credence lend ;  
 The glory of our wise Tolosa he,  
 Child of repose and bland felicity.



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Go then, my book, and be of love a token  
Whose strength by journeys long is never broken,  
A trivial thing, if one should buy and give,  
But from the author value you derive.  
Great is the difference 'tween fountain-head  
And water stagnant in a trough of lead.

C

### *TO BASSUS*

THE feast you gave me cost but half a crown,  
Yet I must call next day in proper trim  
And walk before your chair through half the town  
To call on ten old hags of aspect grim.  
My toga's worn and shabby I admit,  
But half a crown won't buy the like of it.

\* CI

### *TO DOMITIAN-HERCULES*

THOU Appian Way, of all our roads the queen,  
Whom Caesar hallows as Alcides seen,  
If thou wouldst know the toils of Hercules,  
Hark to the tale and listen—they are these.  
He killed the Libyan, won the fruit of gold,  
And took her girdle from the Amazon bold ;  
The lion and the Arcadian boar he slew,  
Nor let the hydra's heads spring forth anew ;  
The brazen stag, the birds of Stymphalus,  
He drove away, from hell dragged Cerberus,  
And to the Tiber Geryon's cattle brought :  
These are the deeds the lesser hero wrought.  
Now for the greater god : his exploits hear  
Whom the sixth stone from Alba doth revere.  
The Palatine he saved from ruthless lords  
And for his god in boyhood crushed their swords.  
Then when alone he'd gained the sovranty  
He gave it up, consenting third to be.  
Three times he's humbled northern Hister's brow,  
And three times bathed his steeds in Getic snow,  
And takes a victor's name from Arctic skies,  
Albeit he scorns these easy victories.  
Peace, morals, stars, divinities to heaven,  
Temples to gods, and wreaths to Jove, he's given.  
For him Alcides must too puny prove ;  
Come now, our god ; appears as father Jove.

\* CII

*TO PHOEBUS*

YOU return me my bond for four thousand : 'twere better  
 To lend me a thousand and leave me your debtor.  
 You must find some one else to oblige in that way ;  
 The money's my own which I cannot repay.

\* CIII

*ON TWO PAGE-BOYS*

WHAT Leda in another swan's embrace  
 Bore you these pages twain so like in face ?  
 In Hierus a Pollux we behold,  
 Asylus wears the mien of Castor bold,  
 And both have Helen's beauty. Had they been  
 In Sparta when small gifts made Venus queen,  
 Paris had cried—' No Tyndaris I need :  
 I choose instead this double Ganymede.'



BOOK TEN





## I

*PREFACE*

AM I too big to suit your mind ?  
 Is ' finis ' long delayed ?  
 Read but few epigrams, and find  
 How short I can be made !  
 Choose the quatrains and couplets—see  
 The columns end with these—  
 For so a bulky tome may be  
 As little as you please.

## \* II

*AN APOLOGY AS PREFACE*

IN too great haste I published Volume Ten :  
 Behold it here revised with careful pen.  
 Some things you'll recognise in their new dress,  
 But of the pieces most, you'll find, are fresh.  
 Be kind to both, dear reader ; for of old  
 Rome said to me—' Your readers are your gold.  
 By them the stream of Lethë you'll survive,  
 By them the better part of you will live.'  
 The wild fig splits Messalla's marbles through,  
 And Crispus' steeds are shattered quite in two :  
 But books are helped by time nor hurt by thieves,  
 Memorials that death uninjured leaves.

## III

*TO PRISCUS*

SLAVES' jargon, filthy venom, he doth spit,  
 The scenes of Billingsgate it might befit,  
 Pedlars who prowl the slums for broken glass  
 Would scorn to give a sulphur match for it.

He calls it mine to sully my repute,  
 The slinking knave is easy to refute ;  
 Would parrots copy quails, would Canus take  
 The squealing bagpipes for the mellow flute ?

Far from my books be that degraded fame,  
 They soar on jewelled wings unmarred of shame ;  
 'Twill cost me nothing if I hold my peace—  
 Then wherefore toil to win a sullied name ?

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* IV

## REAL LIFE

YE folk, who read of Oedipus and Scylla and Medea  
And King Thyestes in the dark, you'll find no wonders here.  
What good to us are boys who lived in ages long by gone,  
Parthenopaeus, Attis, and the drowsed Endymion,  
Or ravished Hylas, or the lad who lost his pinions white,  
Or he who hates the amorous stream, the young Herma-  
phrodite.

In silly fables such as these the foolish may delight,  
But of this volume Life will say—' 'Tis mine'—and she'll be  
right.

No Centaurs here nor Gorgons nor fierce Harpies you will see ;  
My pages have the savour of our own humanity ;  
' To read about myself,' you say, ' is scarcely worth my while.'  
Then turn to old Callimachus : you'll find him just your  
style.

V

## THE SCANDAL-MONGER

MAY that proud knave, who in his loathly verses  
The fame of noble dame and lord asperses,  
Trudge through the slums outcast from every hovel,  
From every haunt where clamorous beggars grovel ;  
So may he crave the crusts of curs rejected,  
Without a den to lurk in, unprotected ;  
Through the long dripping winter may he quiver  
'Mid endless biting blasts to make him shiver,  
Acclaim as blest, and envy every mortal  
Borne out to enter Orcus' gloomy portal ;  
Long may he pray that lagging death may ease him,  
And, when the thread is spun ere Pluto seize him,  
Hear dogs that howl to gnaw his bones and tear them,  
See carrion birds and wave his rags to scare them ;  
And then may hell of suffering never purge him,  
But Aeacus with bitter lashes scourge him,  
With Sisyphus let him lie crushed and bleeding,  
With Tantalus be parched 'mid waves receding,  
Bear every pang that poets have reported ;  
And when the furies have the truth extorted,  
May conscience make more bitter all his curses,  
And he confess ' 'twas I that wrote the verses.'

## \* VI

*ON TRAJAN'S RETURN TO ROME*

AH happy they, whom Fortune grants to see  
 Our chief ablaze with northern pageantry.  
 When shall our maidens at their windows stand  
 And fill the Campus with their happy band ?  
 When shall all Rome on the Flaminian Way  
 See the dust rise that ends the dear delay ?  
 While knights and painted Moors and people cry—  
 ' He comes, he comes '—as Caesar passes by.

## VII

*ON THE SAME*

EACH stream and Naiad fed on Northern snows,  
 O Rhine, to thee, the sire, her life blood owes ;  
 Henceforth unfettered be thy waters fair  
 That no barbarian wheel shall ever dare,  
 When thou art bound by frost, to traverse thee ;  
 If thou wouldst go thy way, thy banks made free,  
 And thou be Roman, thou must needs restore  
 Our Trajan to his folk and town once more.  
 His presence doth the royal Tiber need ;  
 Thine overlord is he, do thou give heed !

## VIII

*THE CONDITION*

THOUGH Paula wants to marry me,  
 That wealthy hag, I can't agree ;  
 I really do not think I could :  
 If she were older, then I would !

## IX

*POETIC FAME*

I AM a poet famed the wide world through  
 For measures Ovid and Catullus knew,  
 For merry wit and kindly—this I claim.  
 Yet envy not—A Derby winner's fame  
 Is greater ; mine of course must rank below it,  
           I am a poet.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* X

## TO PAULUS

THOUGH your laurel-wreathed axes announce the new year  
At a thousand levees every morn you appear.  
What to us do you leave? What in Rome can I do,  
Who am one of the people, the poor vulgar crew?  
Shall I hail him as 'lord' who scarce gives me a glance?  
The greeting you give your proud honours enhance.  
Shall I follow his chair? You to bear it desire  
And strive to go first through the thick of the mire.  
Shall I rise to applaud him? That chance you ne'er miss  
And are standing already to throw him a kiss.  
What shall poor fellows do whom no patron will own?  
Your consular purple has ousted our gown.

XI

## TO CALLIODORUS

OF Theseus and Pirithous you rave  
And boast yourself the peer of Pylades.  
Hang me if you are fit to play the slave,  
To clean a sty, or feed the swine for these!  
You boast the thrice-turned coat, the loan you gave  
Your friend to meet his need—Remember, please,  
The heroes gave no doles, but shared their store;  
Whatever you may give you keep far more.

\* XII

## TO DOMITIUS

SOON upon the Aemilian Way you will go  
And visit Vercellae and see the broad Po.  
Deuce take it, I'm glad you are going, my friend,  
Though upon you my days for enjoyment depend.  
I shall miss you, but still it is worth it, I own:  
For one summer you're free from the burden of Town.  
Let your skin drink the sunlight in each greedy pore—  
How handsome you'll grow on that far distant shore!  
When you come back you'll seem quite a different man;  
We poor pallid townfolk will envy your tan.  
But though you be burned, as by Egypt's hot sun,  
Stay a few weeks in Rome and that brown will be gone.

## XIII

*TO COTTA*

A CARRIAGE bears your pampered horde along,  
 A Libyan toils behind to guard the throng,  
 Your rooms are strewn with couches everywhere,  
 You stain the very sea with unguents rare,  
 Fine vintages your crystal goblets crown,  
 And Venus lies not on a softer down ;  
 Yet at the threshold of a haughty fair  
 All night you lie—she heeds not tear or prayer—  
 Sighs rend your heart—I know beyond a doubt  
 What's wrong—you never learned to do without.

## \* XIV

*THE PROOF OF FRIENDSHIP*

You say you're my friend, but you never will lend  
 E'en a trifle : it's always ' No, No ' !  
 Your coffers are brimming, your Nile-fields are swimming  
 With plenty, while I hungry go.  
 When winter draws nigh do you ever supply  
 Me with gown, or a fat present make ?  
 No proof can I find of your friendship but wind :  
 And that in my face you will break.

## \* XV

*THE CAREFUL LOVER*

FROM Cupid Afer stole a dart  
 And with it pierced a maiden's heart.  
 It's true her dowry fanned love's flame ;  
 But then friend Afer knows the game.

## \* XVI

*TO GAIUS*

IF ' promise ' and ' give ' mean exactly the same,  
 Though you never hand over, I'll play your own game.  
 Please accept all the ore of Asturia's mines  
 And the rich golden sand that old Tagus refines,

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Accept all the pearls that in India rest,  
And the wealth that the phoenix conceals in his nest,  
Accept the wet purple that Tyrians store,  
Accept all the world—but in promise, no more.

## XVII

### *TO MACER*

'Tis vain my Muse that you refuse your seasonable wit ;  
And so to do is lawless too, since Macer asks for it ;  
A quip, a jest will please him best—no solemn verses, pray—  
For he complains your merry strains have ceased for many  
a day ;  
Reports, indeed, he ought to read as guardian of the roads ;  
O Appian Way, what will you say if he reads heavy odes ?

## XVIII

### *ON MARIUS*

HE never entertains nor gives to any,  
He never lends, he has not got a penny ;  
Though barren his regard, men strive to win it ;—  
Your toga, Rome, has many a fool within it.

## \* XIX

### *TO PLINY*

Go now, my Muse, and take this screed  
For learned Plinius to read :  
It is not wise nor yet discreet  
But still it has a spice of wit.  
Short is the way ; just climb the height  
Across Suburra till you sight  
Spray-sprinkled Orpheus 'mid the throng  
Of beasts enraptured with his song,  
And by his side the eagle bold  
That bore the boy to Jove of old,  
And so to Pedo's modest home,  
Its frieze bird graven, you will come.

But do not with strong liquor floun  
 Knock at a time that's not your own.  
 His days to study he must give,  
 Composing speeches that shall live  
 With Tully's best, to please the ears  
 And win a verdict from the Peers.  
 More safe 'twill be to go a-calling  
 If lamps are lit and night is falling.  
 That is your hour, when reigns the rose,  
 When brows are wet, and Bacchus flows ;  
 For when the Wine-god wildly rages  
 Stern Catos well may read my pages.

\* XX

*TO MANIUS*

DEAR Manius, comrade of my boyhood's years,  
 Than whom none dearer in the land of Spain,  
 No man more worthy of my love appears,  
 'Tis you who make me wish to see again  
 My native homesteads and the golden shore  
 That Celtiberian Salo washed of yore.

If you were with me I would be content  
 To dwell in Afric village parched and dry,  
 With you beside to share my banishment  
 I would endure the cold of Scythia's sky :  
 Yea, every place to us a Rome would be  
 Where every thought is shared 'twixt you and me.

XXI

*THE PEDANT*

WHY should you choose to make your verse obscure ?  
 The most expert grammarians it amazes,  
 Till Bentley doubts and Porson is not sure  
 About the meaning of your crabbed phrases ;

No mortal can appreciate your style,  
 It needs the intellect of an Apollo ;  
 Think you that Virgil being clear is vile,  
 And Cinna nobler being hard to follow ?



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Since in obscurity you put your trust,  
If there be fame in that, your verse should win it ;  
Mine is for men of taste—no Dry-as-dust  
Need toil to extricate the meaning in it.

## XXII

### *PRECAUTIONS*

I SMEAR my lips with salve, my chin with plaster,  
And yet, Philaenis, there is naught amiss ;  
I only use them to avoid disaster ;  
What do I apprehend, you say ?—A kiss.

## XXIII

### *TO ANTONIUS PRIMUS ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY*

THOSE five-and-seventy years now safely gone,  
How happy is your quiet age, how dear  
Are memory's pictures that you gaze upon,  
You need not shrink, tho' Lethe's wave be near ;  
The past has not a shade for you to fear,  
No page of all its book you dread to con ;  
Redoubled happiness and life hath he  
Whose joy doth live again in memory.

## \* XXIV

### *ON HIS BIRTHDAY*

DEAR first of March, my natal morn,  
Fairest of days, when I was born,  
Such gifts as I from maidens take,  
This censer and this birthday-cake  
I, fifty-seven now, do bring  
To your high shrine as offering.  
If it be well that I should live  
Twice nine years more may heaven give ;  
And then I will not ask for more,  
But go still hale to Pluto's shore,  
Rejoicing that three parts I'd run  
Of life, before my days were done.

\* XXV

*A CIRCUS SCENE*

IF Mucius, when you saw him yesterday,  
 His hand within the fire boldly lay,  
 Seemed to you brave and valiant and strong,  
 Then to Abdera's people you belong.  
 For when the torturer says—'Thrust in your hand',  
 The brave man's he who hears not the command.

XXVI

*ON THE DEATH OF VARUS*

HONOURED of all but yesterday,  
 Loved of his men and of Egypt's throng,  
 Now in a stranger land, the prey  
 Of death, for his coming we vainly long ;  
 O'er that marble face we might not weep,  
 Not ours with perfume the pyre to steep ;  
 But the traitor Nile cannot take away  
 The fame that lives in a deathless song.

\* XXVII

*TO DIODORUS*

AT your board on your birthday the senate reclines,  
 And many a knight in your company dines.  
 Each guest gets a crown when the banquet is done :  
 And yet people say you are nobody's son.

XXVIII

*THE TEMPLE OF JANUS*

FOUNDER of time and all therein,  
 With thee our prayers and vows begin,  
 Janus, thou glorious god,  
 Too mean of yore was thine abode,  
 For through thine arch as by a road  
 Rome's hurrying myriads trod ;

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Where'er thy fourfold face doth turn  
A forum now mayst thou discern ;  
Thy shrine may none profane.  
For Caesar's gift, a boon so great,  
Keeps fast for aye thine iron gate  
In sign that peace doth reign.

## XXIX

### TO SEXTILIANUS

ON Saturn's feast you used to send  
Me plate, but now my luck is dead,  
You give it to your lady friends  
Instead.

My natal day no toga brought,  
That customary gift you dock  
Because the price of it has bought  
Her frock.

How cheap is she, that lady gay,  
For not a penny you have lost ;  
*You* win her favour and *I* pay  
The cost.

## XXX

### A VILLA AT FORMIAE

SWEET Formiae, the pleasant home  
Apollinaris loveth well,  
Released from all the cares of Rome  
'Tis here that he would choose to dwell ;  
Tibur his heart cannot beguile  
Though there his loving spouse was born ;  
He seeks not Circe's witching isle,  
Praneste, Antium, he doth scorn ;  
Though fair be Tusculum's retreat,  
And Caieta has ancient fame,  
Though Liris' gentle stream be sweet,  
His fealty they cannot claim ;  
He chooses not thy cooling shade.  
Marica, and he would forsake  
The fountain of the water-maid  
Who plunges in the Lucrine lake ;

Here is no stagnant sea or air  
 The deep, a living thing, exhales,  
 Soft breath to toy with Thais' hair  
 And gently fill the painted sails ;  
 How lightly here the Zephyrs play,  
 As though a maiden's dainty hand  
 The heat of summer to allay,  
 Her loveliness had softly fanned ;  
 Not far the fisher needs to roam,  
 But in the waters clear and still  
 Beneath the casement of his home  
 May watch and take his prey at will ;  
 And here though Aeolus should rave,  
 The table lacks not dainty fare ;  
 The fish-pool fears no angry wave,  
 Pike, mullet, lampreys all are there,  
 Home-bred its denizens and tame  
 Huge mullets here and barbel swim,  
 Whose keeper knows them all by name  
 And at his call they come to him ;  
 Their lord, alas, through all the year  
 From city toil is seldom free,  
 Few days, O Rome, thou givest him here,  
 How many he must give to thee ;  
 Oh happy they who may abide  
 In this fair place although in thrall ;  
 These pleasures doth their lord provide,  
 His servants have the joy of all.

## XXXI

*TO CALLIODORUS*

WHEN yesterday you sold a slave and spent  
 On one luxurious feast the price he brought,  
 How foul that feast ; the mullet that you bought,  
 Its very crown and pride, to all intent  
 Was not a fish, and thus we brand your greed—  
 Ah, loathly wretch, on human life you feed.

## \* XXXII

*ON A PORTRAIT*

You ask whose lineaments this picture shows,  
 Which now I deck with violet and rose.  
 Here stands Antonius in his youthful prime  
 Who thus in age still knows his manhood's time.  
 Ah would thus pictured we his mind could see !  
 No painting to the world more fair would be.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXIII

## TO MUNATIUS GALLUS

SIMPLER than Sabines in their golden age,  
In virtue loftier than the Attic sage,  
My loyal friend, may Venus grant thee this,  
That, through thy lovely daughter's wedded bliss,  
Thy union with a house of ancient fame  
Endure for ever, so thou clear my name  
That foul malevolence has dared asperse ;  
If any say I wrote that poisoned verse,  
Do thou reply as often thou hast said,  
'None writes like that whose verse is ever read.'  
My Muse speaks never ill of any man ;  
'Tis but their vices lie beneath her ban.

\* XXXIV

## TO THE EMPEROR TRAJAN

MAY the gods grant thee, Sire, thy due reward,  
Who dost the rights of injured patrons guard.  
That they should not by freedmen exiled be,  
And make thee blessed for perpetuity.  
But clients also know thee for their friend  
Prepared to their just claims thy help to lend.  
Thou dost deserve, and hast, the power to aid :  
May it be thine to prove these words I've said.

\* XXXV

## THE POET SULPICIA

YE wives, Sulpicia's pages scan,  
Who wish to please one only man :  
Ye husbands, read Sulpicia too,  
Who wish one only bride to woo.  
She tells not of Medea's rages ;  
Scylla and Byblis in her pages  
Have no existence, in the least,  
Nor yet Thyestes' direful feast ;  
She tells of love that's pure and good,  
Where wit meets mirth in happy mood,

And honest critics well may say  
 None is more modest, none more gay.  
 E'en so Egeria, well I wot,  
 Would jest with Numa in her grot.  
 Had Sappho her as teacher seen,  
 More wise, more modest, she had been ;  
 Though were she set by Sappho's side  
 Phaon would choose her for his bride ;  
 Yet all in vain : she would not follow  
 Jupiter, Bacchus, or Apollo  
 To be their mate, or live one day  
 If her Calenus passed away.

## XXXVI

*TO MUNNA*

You search the vaults of Gaul for doctored wine,  
 Jars mellowed (save the mark !) in smoky heat,  
 Across the sea this poison you consign  
 At vast expense your luckless friends to cheat ;  
 The price of it would buy Falernian sweet,  
 With this would Setine vineyards be content,  
 And far from home you work lest you should meet  
 And have to drink the filthy wine you sent.

## XXXVII

*TO MATERNUS*

HONEST of speech by your skill you reign  
 Unchallenged lord of the Courts of Rome ;  
 Your friend and comrade is going home,  
 Have you any commands for the Spanish main ?

Is it better to catch foul frogs or bait  
 For worthless sticklebacks here or there,  
 To throw again to his rocky lair  
 The mullet of less than three pounds' weight ?

Of tasteless mussels a feast you make,  
 And think dwarfed cockles are dainty fare,  
 Whilst Baiae envies the oysters there,  
 And even the slaves a share may take.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Which is the better, a fox to snare  
That wounds your hounds with his poisoned teeth,  
Or to draw full nets from the deeps beneath  
And set them again for a leaping hare ?

Here is your keeper—he looks quite vain  
Having caught a badger—oh dainty dish !  
You dwell by the coast, Rome sends you fish,  
Have you any commands for the Spanish main ?

\* XXXVIII

### *CALENUS AND SULPICIA*

FOR fifteen years, Calenus, by your side,  
Sulpicia has lived, a blooming bride.  
O nights of bliss, whose each immortal hour  
Is marked by pearls from distant India's shore.  
What conflicts and what rivalry of love  
Has your bed witnessed and the lamp above !  
These fifteen years alone you hold as life,  
Nor count the days before you had a wife.  
For if kind Fate would turn again the page  
One day surpasses four times Nestor's age.

XXXIX

### *THE OLD SERPENT*

LESBIA, in owning you were born  
When Charles was King, you are forsworn ;  
And if 'twas Charles Martel you meant,  
You lie again : it's evident  
That one with your experience must  
Have sprung with Adam from the dust !

\* XL

### *INNOCENT AMUSEMENTS*

I WAS told that my Polla had taken a fancy  
To intimate talks all alone with a Nancy.  
I ventured upon them one evening to call,  
And I found that he was not a Nancy at all.

## XLI

*TO PROCULEIA*

You left your honoured spouse on New Year's day  
 And claimed your dowry back ; what sudden strain  
 Has burst the bond ? What is the quarrel pray ?  
 I know the reason you will not explain ;  
 His proper state as Praetor to maintain  
 A thousand pounds or so he must disburse,  
 However meanly done be Rhea's show ;  
 And on the public games to make it worse  
 Two hundred more—no matrimonial woe  
 You urge, but fear that he should wrong your purse.

## \* XLII

*TO DINDYMUS*

So soft on your cheeks is the shadowy down  
 That it fades with a breath in the breeze or the sun.  
 Such a delicate bloom as on quinces oft lingers  
 That shine when they're plucked by a maiden's soft fingers.  
 And if too repeated my kisses I press  
 On your lips, a new beard springs up from my caress.

## XLIII

*A PRODUCTIVE ESTATE*

SEVEN wives you've had and all of them lie buried in your  
 field ;  
 I don't suppose that any land could boast more rich a yield.

## \* XLIV

*TO QUINTUS OVIDIUS*

DEAR Ovid, who to Caledonia's snow  
 And Tethys and old Ocean now must go,  
 Leaving Nomentum and King Numa's heights  
 And that warm hearth in which your age delights,



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Fate cannot be differred though pleasure may,  
Her threads to your account each moment pay.  
So when you've shown, your comrade dear to please,  
That you prefer your promise to your ease,  
Then to your Sabine farm your presence lend  
And count yourself your own most precious friend.

### XLV

#### *PERVERTED TASTE*

THE graceful tributes of my verse,  
My tender lyrics, you asperse ;  
    Too suave and soft their tone ;  
And, like a mongrel cur, eschew  
The dainties that I offer you,  
    And choose to gnaw a bone ;  
For liquor sour in taste and scent  
Go seek elsewhere, for mine is meant  
    For cultured taste alone.

### \* XLVI

#### *TO MATHO*

You must always be witty : 'twere better, you know,  
To blend good and bad with the just so-and-so.

### \* XLVII

#### *THE HAPPY LIFE*

THE things that make a happy life,  
    My genial friend, are these :  
A quiet dwelling free from strife,  
    Health, strength, a mind at ease ;  
Money bequeathed, not hardly won,  
A blazing fire when work is done.

Ingenuous prudence, equal friends,  
    Bright talk and simple fare,  
A farm that crops ungrudging lends,  
    Soberness free from care,  
A wife who's chaste yet fond of sport,  
And sleep that makes the night seem short.

With what you are be satisfied,  
 Nor let ambition range ;  
 Contented still whate'er betide  
 And caring naught for change.  
 Pray not for death, nor yet feel fear  
 When the last hour of life draws near.

## XLVIII

*THE INVITATION*

THE priests proclaim the hour at Isis' shrine,  
 When guard is changed 'tis time to bathe and dine ;  
 Cool are the baths too hot an hour ago,  
 At the sixth hour with Nero's heat they glow ;  
 Friends, are you ready ? There are five of you,  
 My horse-shoe couch holds seven—Bring Lupus, too.  
 My bailiff's wife has gathered mallows light  
 And garden treasures for the feast to-night.  
 Sliced leeks there are, dwarf lettuce cool and smooth,  
 Rocket to stimulate and mint to soothe,  
 Anchovies crowned with egg and dressed with rue,  
 And pickled pork with tunny wine, will do  
 To whet the appetite, and following these  
 A kid the ravening wolf had hoped to seize,  
 Rissoles that need no carving-knife are there,  
 Spring cabbages and beans—the labourer's fare,  
 A fowl, a ham that twice has served : and last  
 Sweet apples come to crown the whole repast.  
 Then as to home-grown wine, I know 'tis clear,  
 Free from all crust, for it was made this year ;  
 Gay jest and kindly wit shall this beget  
 With naught to bring repentance or regret ;  
 Safely we'll gossip of the racing season,  
 The cup shall stir no guest of mine to treason.

## XLIX

*TO COTTA*

IN cups of amethystine hue  
 Was rich Opimian poured for you,  
 'Twas common Sabine raw and new  
 You gave to me, and said,  
 ' Wilt have a cup of gold for it ' ?  
 No, I will not, for I submit  
 A golden cup is hardly fit  
 For drink as dull as lead.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## L

### *ON THE DEATH OF THE CHARIOTEER, SCORPUS*

BREAK, Victory, the palm of thy renown,  
Let Favour smite her naked breast, and Fame  
Don sorrow's garb ; let Glory cast the crown  
That decked her tresses to the cruel flame ;  
Robbed of his youthful prime—ah deed of shame—  
The grim black steeds doth Scorpus yoke : of yore  
Swiftly he drove, swift to the goal he came,  
Too swiftly now his race of life is o'er.

## LI

### *THE JOYS OF SPRING*

THE Bull looks backwards on the Ram, for now  
The changing twins have stilled the winter's breath :  
The meadow smiles and green is every bough,  
And Philomel doth wail for Itys' death.

My busy friend, for thee calm joy is banned,  
Ah for the sunshine and ungirdled ease,  
The groves, the water-springs, the shining sand,  
With Anxur bright above the dancing seas.

Ah for the couch from which on either side  
Thou seest the boats at sea, or in the port  
Or on the stream, for here thou canst deride  
Rome's baths, and theatres and wrangling court,

And here no gleaming temple soars aloft,  
Here hath the Thunderer no towering shrine ;  
Now tired thou sayest—methinks I hear thee oft—  
' Rome keep thine own but let my life be mine.'

## LII

THEYLIN uiderat in toga spadonem,  
Damnatum Numa dixit esse moecham.

## LIII

*ON THE DEATH OF SCORPUS*

SCORPUS am I, the charioteer  
 Who gained a glorious name,  
 The noisy circus held me dear,  
 But ah, how brief my fame !  
 At twenty-seven my course was done,  
 For Lachesis, cajoled  
 By counting up the palms I won,  
 Had thought that I was old.

## \* LIV

*TO OLUUS*

YOUR close-sheeted tables may be very fine,  
 But, if you cannot see them, so likewise are mine.

## LV

ARRECTUM quotiens Marulla penem  
 Pensauit digitis diuque mensa est,  
 Libras scripula sextulasque dicit ;  
 Idem post opus et suas palaestras  
 Loro cum similis iacet remisso,  
 Quanto sit leuior Marulla dicit.  
 Non ergo est manus ista, sed statera.

## LVI

*TO GALLUS*

I WAIT on you all day, my home forsaking,  
 Thrice climb the Aventine tho' great the height is ;  
 Now A can stop or draw a tooth that's aching,  
 And B perhaps may heal conjunctivitis,  
 To deal with scars is C's sole undertaking,  
 While D can cure a case of tonsilitis ;  
 Had I a hernia to E you'd send me ;  
 But I'm a total wreck—and who can mend me ?



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LVII

## TO SEXTUS

EIGHT ounces of pepper ! I'm sorry to state,  
Instead of a pound of good bright silver-plate.  
I will not disparage your kindness, my lord :  
But pepper, at that price, I cannot afford.

\* LVIII

## TO FAUSTINUS

A CALM retreat by Anxur's sparkling foam,  
A nearer Baiae, and a seaside home,  
A wood cicadas could not noisy make  
In the hot summer, and a river lake ;  
While these were mine, with you the Muse I wooed ;  
But now great Rome consumes my solitude.  
I toil in vain, no day is here my own,  
Tossed like a mariner on the waves of Town,  
While my suburban acres I maintain  
And humble dwelling near Quirinus' fane.  
But there are other ways to show regard  
Than lounging at your levees, and a bard  
Must never waste a moment ; yet I swear,  
Though I neglect them, you I hold most dear.

LIX

## TO A DAINY CRITIC

You like the shortest poems, not the best,  
'Tis those you always read—and skip the rest ;  
I spread a varied banquet for your taste,  
You take made dishes and the rest you waste.  
And wrong your appetite, for truth to tell  
A satisfying meal needs bread as well.

LX

## ON MUNNA

MUNNA has asked the right for children three,  
Two boys he has—a schoolmaster is he.

## LXI

*EROTION'S GRAVE*

HERE sleeps the body of the little maid,  
 Erotion,  
 Ere her sixth winter fate had called her shade  
 To hasten on ;  
 Whoe'er thou art who after me shall own  
 This tiny plot,  
 Lay year by year the dues upon her stone ;  
 Forget her not.  
 So shall thy house endure nor suffering know,  
 And this remain  
 The only sign and monument of woe  
 On thy domain.

## \* LXII

*TO A SCHOOLMASTER*

GOOD schoolmaster, pray give your classes a rest.  
 If you do, I will ask that next term you be pressed  
 By curly-haired boys flocking close to your table,  
 And no short-hand clerk or quick counter be able  
 To boast that he has a more studious crew  
 Of pupils and fonder of teacher than you.  
 The hot sunny days are upon us again,  
 And blazing July burns the ripening grain,  
 So let your grim rod and your whip, put to sleep,  
 Till the Ides of October a holiday keep.  
 In summer if children can only stay well,  
 They learn quite enough and can rest for a spell.

## LXIII

*ON A MATRON'S GRAVE*

GREAT is mine honour, tho' my tomb be small ;  
 No marble pile, no pyramid you see.  
 Twice I beheld Tarentum's festival,  
 And lived a long life through from sorrow free ;  
 Five sons, five daughters, Juno granted me,  
 And all survived to hear my latest breath.  
 High glory seldom won I gained—for he  
 I loved was mine, I his alone till death.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXIV

## *TO POLLA, WIFE OF LUCAN*

DEAR lady, if you read this little book,  
Do not with frowns upon my jesting look.  
He, your own bard, our Muse's chiefest glory,  
When on Pierian trump he sang war's story,  
Was not ashamed to write in playful strain—  
'If I'm no Ganymede, why here remain?'

LXV

## *TO CHARMENION*

You are from Corinth—loathly den  
And I a Spanish citizen  
From Tagus' land, I wonder then  
That you should call me 'brother';  
While you are decked with tresses fair  
And smooth your limbs with daily care,  
I have the Spaniard's shaggy hair;  
Are we like one another?

You lisp and squeak, I far prefer  
My baby's tone as manlier;  
Are pigeons like to eagles, Sir?  
Pray cease my ears to blister  
With such endearments; it is plain  
Kids cannot wear the lion's mane;  
Just call me 'brother' once again,  
And I will call you 'sister'.

\* LXVI

## *TO THE PAGE, THEOPOMPUS*

Who pray could be so harsh, so proud of look  
As to declare that you should be a cook?  
Could any man endure your face to shame  
With soot, or mar your hair with greasy flame?  
Who in your place will hold the crystal glass,  
Or with more grace the old Falernian pass?  
If fates like this you angel boys attend,  
Ganymede too will in the kitchen end.

## LXVII

*ON AN OLD WOMAN'S GRAVE*

SHE saw the flood in Noah's time,  
 To Cush she acted foster-mother,  
 But she was rather past her prime  
 When Milcah flourished and her brother ;  
 With reverence seemly in a sage  
 Old Abram spoke of her as 'Granny',  
 And it was in her middle age  
 That Isaac loved to call her 'Nanny'.  
 No hoary crow her years surpassed,  
 But still a mate we don't deny her :  
 Here lies she—amorous to the last—  
 With Jacob's oldest shepherd by her.

## \* LXVIII

*TO A LADY WHO APES FOREIGN FASHIONS*

You were not born in Paris nor yet Armentieres,  
 And you live in a flat near Park Lane, it appears.  
 Your father I know was a native of Thame,  
 And your simple old mother from Somerset came ;  
 Yet though you're as English as honest Queen Bess,  
 As 'chéri' and 'mon chou' all your men you address.  
 A couch is the place for such phrases as these,  
 When a maiden is anxious her lover to please.  
 Perhaps you would learn like our matrons to speak,  
 And ways of allurements to win lovers seek ?  
 Well, though you may practise the tricks of Paree,  
 You will never a Madame de Pompadour be.

## \* LXIX

*THE BREECHES-WEARER*

WHEN a wife keeps her man under close lock and key  
 And herself goes wherever she will ;  
 I think in this case every one will agree  
 That Jack is the lady not Jill.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXX

## *TO POTITUS*

IN twelve whole months one book I hardly finished,  
So you declare my industry too small ;  
What hours have I by trouble undiminished ?  
The wonder is that I should write at all.

Ere dawn I call on patrons who ignore me,  
To wish them all the luck that's never mine ;  
Then social care and business come to bore me,  
To seal some deed I scale the Aventine ;

The Consul or the Praetor may detain me,  
Or I am caught in their attendant throng,  
Often a dismal poet will constrain me  
To hear his wretched verses all day long ;

If men of law or critics have waylaid me  
With some request, I dare not say them nay ;  
And when at weary eve my dole is paid me  
What time is left for writing verses pray ?

\* LXXI

## *AN EPITAPH : IN DEATH UNITED*

WHOE'ER thou art who dost for parents pray  
A late and happy end, one moment stay  
And read the record on this tomb engraved,  
Wherein Rabirius in death has laid  
His father and his mother. They together  
Lived sixty years through fair and stormy weather,  
And then together died without regret,  
While on one pyre their bodies both were set.  
And yet Rabirius unconsoled doth mourn  
As though from him they were untimely torn.

LXXII

## *THE NEW REGIME*

Go smooth-lipped flatteries ; this verse of mine  
Is now made free. I need no more abase  
My Muse, nor call our chief a ' Lord Divine ',  
Henceforth in Rome have ye no resting-place.

Seek the bedizened Persian King who craves  
 Abjects about his jewelled feet to crawl ;  
 Here Trajan rules, no lord of grovelling slaves,  
 A senator, most righteous of them all ;

From death to life is rugged truth restored,  
 And here in simple grandeur reigneth she ;  
 O Rome, be wise—forget the words abhorred  
 That tyranny aforetime wrung from thee !

\* LXXIII

*TO MARCUS*

A WELCOME pledge your letter brings, I own,  
 The formal gift of an Italian gown ;  
 Not such a one as old Fabricius wore,  
 But such as gay Maecenas donned of yore.  
 Less precious were it from another hand—  
 Not every victim heaven can command—  
 But sent from you I must the name approve,  
 E'en if the gift itself I did not love ;  
 And more than gift and name do I commend  
 The kindly judgment of my learned friend.

LXXIV

*REPOSE*

SPARE me, for I am tired with labour long  
 And social calls ; O Rome, thou canst discern it ;  
 Still must I toil amid the clients' throng  
 For one half-crown, and spend all day to earn it.

Great sacks of gold the charioteer reward,  
 It takes him but a single hour to win them ;  
 My little books demand no golden hoard,  
 For well they know how little there is in them.

I do not ask Apulian fields to till,  
 Hybla's or Egypt's wealth that none may number,  
 Or vineyards rich that crown the Setine hill ;  
 The greater boon I ask is merely slumber !

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXV

## THE CLIMAX

WITH Galla it once was—' Two hundred, mon cher '—  
And I will confess it, she did not seem dear.  
A year passed away, and one hundred seemed more,  
When she sank to that figure, than two had before.  
Another half-year and 'twas—' Twenty I'll make it ' :  
I offered her ten, but she said—' I can't take it ' .  
Two or three months went by and I got a short note—  
' Five pounds I am asking '—the good lady wrote.  
I did not respond, so she came to a pound,  
And even a sovereign too much I found.  
When we met the next time, she was willing to have  
The paltry half-crown I had given my slave.  
Do you think she was able much lower to go ?  
Yes. ' Take me for nothing ' . My answer was—' No ' .

LXXVI

## THE POET'S REWARD

Now, Fortune, is this fair in you ?  
Here's one, no Parthian or Jew,  
No abject slave, re-made as knight,  
But Roman both by blood and right ;  
Learned in Greek and Latin, kind,  
A trustier friend were hard to find—  
Yet he was shivering, while in scarlet  
Mule-drivers flaunt. You say ' the varlet  
Is guilty of a crime ' ? I know it ;  
A sad one too—*he is a poet.*

LXXVII

## ON CARUS

CARUS is dead ; the infamous deceiver ;  
To crown his many crimes he died of fever !  
That fever too was cruel and malignant,  
It should have been a quartan, more benignant ;  
For had it brought the germs of that to fill him,  
He might have lived to let the doctor kill him.

## \* LXXVIII

*TO MACER*

To far Salonae now your way you wend,  
 Whom loyalty and love of right attend,  
 And power that never seeks its purse to fill,  
 But has fair virtue for its handmaid still.  
 O happy dwellers in that golden land,  
 Your ruler will return with empty hand,  
 And you with tearful joy on his last day  
 Will seek pretexts to make him longer stay.  
 But I, who long to see you once again,  
 Go now my way to Gaul, and savage Spain:  
 But on each page from Tagus' wave I write,  
 My pen shall Macer's honoured name indite.  
 And so when you peruse the bards of old,  
 May I a favoured place among them hold,  
 And of that goodly band of poets see  
 None save Catullus taken before me.

## \* LXXIX

## THE RIVALS

TORQUATUS acquired a mansion near town ;  
 Otacilius at once bought a plot for his own.  
 Torquatus built baths that with marble shine bright ;  
 Otacilius set up a bath-pot that night.  
 Torquatus laid out laurel-groves for his ease ;  
 Otacilius planted a hundred nut-trees.  
 When Torquatus was consul, the other became  
 A town mayor, and thought that the posts were the same.  
 Like the frog in the fable who puffed till he burst,  
 Otacilius won't let Torquatus be first.

## LXXX

*THE CONNOISSEUR*

WHEN Eros weeps in blank despair  
 To see a cup of Myrrine ware,  
 Fair slaves, a citrus table-top,  
 The very pick of all the shop,



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And groans for bitterness to spy them  
Because, poor wretch, he cannot buy them,  
You laugh and jeer to hear him sigh,  
Good onlooker, whose eyes are dry !  
Though envious tears your soul bedew,  
Is he a greater fool than you ?

### LXXXI

CUM duo uenissent ad Phyllida mane fututum  
Et nudam cuperet sumere uterque prior,  
Promisit pariter se Phyllis utrique daturam,  
Et dedit : ille pedem sustulit, hic tunicam.

### LXXXII

#### TO GALLUS

IF in my suffering any good you find,  
I'll call at dawn or midnight, nor complain,  
Nipped by the bitter blast of freezing wind,  
Endure the snow and brave the chilling rain ;  
But not a single farthing you can gain,  
And I must bear a tortured slave's distress—  
Oh spare a weary wight the wanton pain  
That racks him and to you is profitless !

### \* LXXXIII

#### TO MARINUS

You scrape a few hairs from the side of your head,  
So that over your bare-shining baldness they spread ;  
But blown by the wind they return to their place  
And with two big curls your poor naked poll grace.  
You'd think that we had old Silenus in sight  
Between young Adonis and Hermaphrodite.  
Confess your old age and leave all your head bare :  
There's nothing more ugly than bald men with hair.

### LXXXIV

#### THE BEDFELLOW

HE sits up late, you think it odd demeanour ?  
Think of his wife ! Good heavens, have you seen her ?

## LXXXV

*A PARADOX*

AN ancient boatman bought a plot of ground  
 Beside the stream where he had plied his calling,  
 But Tiber's winter flood rose quickly round  
 The field, and threatened ruin most appalling ;  
 And so with stones he filled his useless boat  
 Which, now a dam, averted inundation.  
 Strange miracle ! a craft that would not float  
 Has proved a troubled mariner's salvation !

## LXXXVI

*THE ARCHER*

YOUNG Laurus with unerring aim  
 Strove eagerly to capture fame.  
 So much he loved the butts that he,  
 Old and retired, a butt must be !

## LXXXVII

*ON THE BIRTHDAY OF RESTITUTUS*

THY pious duty Rome fulfil,  
 In prayer and silence greet the morn,  
 Ye wrangling courts, your clamour still,  
 To-day your orator was born ;  
 The trash a pauper client lays  
 Before his lord for offering  
 May wait for Saturn's merry days,  
 Ye rich, your choicest treasure bring ;  
 Proud huckster from Agrippa's street  
 Send him a cloak of Tyrian hue,  
 Gay reveller, a robe should greet  
 The counsel who defended you.  
 Oh wronged but now triumphant dame,  
 Bring gems to him, no glittering paste ;  
 And, antiquary, he doth claim  
 Silver that Phidias' chisel chased ;  
 From hind or hunter, kid or hare,  
 From fisher, treasure of the sea,  
 If each a fitting gift must bear,  
 What should the poet's offering be ?

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXXVIII

## *A PICKER UP OF TRIFLES*

BEFORE the sittings have begun  
Friend Cotta into court will run,  
And every judge's notice scan.  
He is indeed a busy man !

LXXXIX

## *ON THE HERA OF POLYCLEITUS*

How glorious the Hera who hath brought  
To Polycleitus an undying fame,  
The perfect loveliness his hand hath wrought  
Phidias the master might have longed to claim.  
On Ida's mount the shepherd, free of blame,  
Had crowned her as the fairest ever seen ;  
Aye, she had set the heart of Zeus aflame  
Had he not loved his sister and his Queen.

XC

QUID uellis uetulum, Ligeia, cunnum ?  
Quid busti cineres tui lacessis ?  
Tales munditiae decent puellas  
(Nam tu iam nec anus potes uideri) ;  
Istud, crede mihi, Ligeia, belle  
Non mater facit Hectoris, sed uxor.  
Erras si tibi cunus hic uidetur,  
Ad quem mentula pertinere desit.  
Quare si pudor est, Ligeia, noli  
Barbam uellere mortuo leoni.

XCI

OMNES cunuchos habet Almo nec arrigit ipse :  
Et queritur pariat quod sua Polla nihil.

## XCII

*TO MARIUS*

ATINA boasts you are her son, but here  
 Oft have you shared my peace and hold it dear.  
 Guard my twin pines, the glory of the glade,  
 And the holm-oaks, for Faunus loves their shade ;  
 Here doth the lord of Thunder's altar stand,  
 Built rudely by my bailiff's rustic hand,  
 With one to wild Silvanus by its side  
 Which blood of lamb and kid has often dyed ;  
 Diana rules the little shrine you see,  
 And Mars is there, his sister's guest, for he  
 Is patron of my month. Keep this, I pray,  
 And likewise tender Flora's grove of bay,  
 Her refuge when Priapus doth pursue ;  
 Pay sacrifice to all in order due,  
 And when the kindly gods you recompense  
 With offerings of blood and frankincense,  
 Speak thus :—' Though far away doth Martial dwell,  
 Wherever he may be, he loves you well ;  
 Think he is here to share my pious task,  
 And grant us both whatever boon we ask '.

## XCIII

*TO CLEMENS*

IF Padua should greet your eyes  
   Ere yet I may behold her,  
 Where from the spreading plains arise  
   The vine-clad hills to fold her,

My songs to your Sabina bear,  
   No reader yet has conned them ;  
 Proudly their purple robe they wear  
   But only now have donned them ;

How fair the earliest roses look,  
   With rapture we regard them !  
 Fair the fresh pages of a book  
   Ere any touch has marred them.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XCIV

### *WITH A BASKET OF APPLES*

Not like Pheacia's are my trees,  
No guardian dragons turn about them ;  
Nomentum has no need of these,  
Her orchards are secure without them.

The prowling thieves my fruits eschew,  
For all the season through they harden.  
The autumn spoils I send to you  
Were harvested in Covent Garden !

## XCV

INFANTEM tibi uir, tibi, Galla remisit adulter.  
Hi, puto, non dubie se futuisse negant.

## \* XCVI

### *TO AVITUS*

You wonder why I, who in Rome have grown old,  
Should still yearn for Salo and Tagus' rich gold,  
And ever of far-distant lands sing the charms,  
Desiring the fields of their opulent farms.  
Well, I long for the place where a little supplies  
All you need, and each cottage contains luxuries.  
Here a farm means expense, there its owner it pays ;  
Here a poor stingy fire, but there a bright blaze.  
Here hunger costs money and shops your purse drain ;  
There your table is stocked from your own rich domain.  
Here four or more gowns in one summer wear through  
There one will suffice for four autumns to go.  
Fie then on your patrons. The country affords  
Such wealth as you ne'er will obtain from proud lords.

## XCVII

### *DISAPPOINTMENT*

Now all was done—the funeral pyre  
Was built and ready for the fire ;  
His wife—fast fell the tears from her—  
Had bought the spices and the myrrh ;

Bier, urn, and grave were ready too,  
 And bearers all in order due ;  
 At the last gasp old Numa still  
 Had just the strength to sign his will  
 With me as heir—then back he fell—  
 And died ? Oh no, he got quite well !

\* XCVIII

*TO PUBLIUS*

WHEN your page is more wanton than young Ganymede,  
 And is far better dressed, as by all is agreed,  
 Than your sister or wife or your daughter or mother,  
 As they lie on the couches beside one another ;  
 Do you want me instead at your ivories to stare,  
 Or seem for your lamps and your tables to care.  
 If you don't want to think of your guests any harm,  
 Let the pages who serve us be fresh from the farm,  
 Unkempt, underhung, without manners at table,  
 The sons of your herd reeking still of the stable.  
 Your tastes are betrayed by the look in your eyes ;  
 For minions and morals do not harmonise.

\* XCIX

*ON A PORTRAIT OF JULIUS RUFUS  
 PREFIXED TO HIS 'SATIRES'*

HAD Socrates a Roman been,  
 As Julius Rufus here he's seen.

C

*ON A PLAGIARIST*

To mix with yours my verse you steal,  
 The knavish trick is far from deft ;  
 The easy contrast will reveal  
 The theft.

Think you a lion's lordly roar  
 Resembles the hyena's howl,  
 Or would you with the eagle soar,  
 Poor owl ?

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Had you one wooden leg, and one  
Endowed with Ladas' might of limb  
Do you suppose that you could run  
Like him ?

\* CI

### ON THE PROFESSIONAL WIT, CAPITOLINUS

IF old Galba, once so happy with Augustus as his lord,  
Were to us from his Elysium for a day to be restored,  
And against Capitolinus now a jesting-match should try,  
'Boorish Galba, cease your fooling'—all the audience would  
cry.

CII

### THE WONDERS OF NATURE

A AND his wife long years have lived apart,  
And now that wife has given him a son.  
Well, B can match that miracle in art ;  
He *fathers* verse, but has *begotten* none.

\* CIII

### TO HIS FELLOW-TOWNSMEN

YE sons of Bilbilis, beneath whose walls  
The rushing Salo leaps and foams and falls,  
My fellow-townsmen, do you take delight  
In your bard's verses, and his glory bright ?  
Be sure I am your honour and your fame,  
And that Verona owes no more her name  
To gay Catullus than you yours to me,  
She who is fain that I her son should be.  
Now four-and-thirty summers have gone by  
Since without me to Ceres' deity  
You bring your rustic cakes, while I away  
In Italy have seen my hair turn grey.  
If you will welcome my return, I come :  
If not, I must go back again to Rome.

## CIV

*A MESSAGE TO SPAIN*

Go, cross the wide but kindly sea  
 With Flavus, go, my little book,  
 And may the gales propitious be  
 Until on Tarraco you look ;  
 Thence in a carriage travel fast  
 Till Bilbilis, and Salo too,  
 Shall greet you, five swift stages past,—  
 What orders do I give to you ?  
 Let naught be done till you have been  
 To greet the few I loved of yore,  
 The comrades that I have not seen  
 These four-and-thirty years and more ;  
 Bid Flavus find a pleasant spot  
 —I ask no costly luxuries—  
 A cheap but comfortable cot  
 Where weariness may lie at ease.  
 The captain's cursing you amain,  
 Fair is the breeze, he will not brook  
 Delay and one must not detain  
 A ship—Good-bye, my little book !





BOOK ELEVEN



## BOOK ELEVEN

### I

#### TO HIS BOOK

How spruce you are, my book ; how debonair !  
Is Tyrian dye the hue for daily wear ?  
You're decked to see Parthenius ? Foolish rover,  
Go—and return with not a page turned over :  
He pores o'er documents of state alone  
And shuns your Muse, and seldom courts his own.  
Are lesser folk too mean for you ? Nay, go  
And seek forthwith Quirinus' portico ;  
'Tis near, and you will find an idler host  
Than Pompey's or Europa's porches boast,  
Or that wherein the heartless Jason stands ;  
Some two or three perhaps, with curious hands,  
May shake the bookworms from your trifling page,  
That is, should nothing serious engage  
Their mind, and they be tired of sporting chat—  
Of course you cannot hope to vie with that.

### \* II

#### CARNIVAL

FORBIDDING Cato with your rigid frown,  
And old Fabricius' daughters, get you gone ;  
And masked Conceit, and stiff Propriety  
And all that in the darkness we put by.  
Ho for the Saturnalia, my boys !  
Ours under Nerva are permitted joys.  
Read crabbed Santra, if you so incline ;  
But let me be ; this little book is mine.

### III

#### A PATRON WANTED

My song is not for city-folk alone,  
Not ears of idlers only hear my lay,  
But stern centurions its magic own,  
'Mid Getic frost they thumb my pages gay,  
And painted Britons sing my songs, men say ;  
'What profit' ? saith my empty purse to me.  
Yet could I sound a strain of deathless worth,  
So loud and clear my clarion tone should be,  
If Heaven that gives Augustus back to earth  
Would send Maecenas, niggard Rome, to thee.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## IV

### *ON NERVA'S THIRD CONSULSHIP*

HOME-GODS, whom great Aeneas saved of old,  
Leaving his wealth when Troy was all afire,  
And Jove, now imaged in eternal gold,  
Thou child, thou sister of the heavenly sire,  
And Janus too, fulfil my heart's desire—  
Preserve unchanged the prince thou hast enrolled  
Thrice on thy page—and let the Senate be  
In following Nerva, perfect e'en as he.

## \* V

### *TO THE EMPEROR NERVA*

IN thee such reverence for right we see  
As Numa showed us in his poverty,  
Though hard it is your ways on his to mould  
When Croesus ne'er could vie with you in gold.  
Were the great names of yore to live again,  
And we might empty the Elysian plain,  
Camillus with thee will for freedom stand,  
Fabricius gold accept from out thy hand,  
Brutus accept thy guidance, Sulla grant  
To thee the power he doth no longer want ;  
Pompey his love in private will allow  
And Crassus on thee all his wealth bestow.  
Yea, even Cato, from hell's nether tide  
Returning, now will be on Caesar's side.

## VI

### *HO FOR THE SATURNALIA*

GLAD are the days of ancient Saturn's feast  
What time the lordly dice-box reigns, a king ;  
O cap-decked Rome, is not my Muse released  
From trammels now ? You laugh—so I may sing ;  
Hence, hence ye pallid cares, get far away  
And let me speak whatever comes to mind,  
No need have I of surly thought to-day—  
But first a lavish draught of Nero's kind,

## BOOK ELEVEN

Half wine, half water ; that's the rule, my slave ;  
So fill the generous cup ; then mingle more  
Than erst Pythagoras to Nero gave ;  
Sober I'm naught, but if good wine you pour  
A tenfold spirit shall my song inspire :  
And add the kisses that Catullus knew,  
Then should I sing with all Verona's fire  
And even match the ' sparrow song ' for you.

### \* VII

#### *TO PAULA*

NEVER more will you say to your poor silly dolt  
Of a husband—before to your lover you bolt—  
' The Emperor bade me this morning to go  
To Circeii or Alba '—That trick's useless now.  
Under Nerva you might a Penelope be,  
If from your old itch you could only get free.  
But how will you manage ? Suppose you pretend  
You are going to see a poor sick lady-friend—  
Your husband will trot at your heels all the way  
And insist on your people a visit to pay.  
Other wantons perhaps to cool their inner fire  
Might say that a spitz-bath is what they require :  
But to tell the plain truth is much better by far,  
And to cry—' There's my lover. I'm off. Tra-la-la '.

### \* VIII

#### *KISSES*

BREATH of balm from foreign trees,  
Scent of saffron on the breeze,  
Fields abloom in leafy spring,  
Winter apples ripening,  
Silken robes worn by a queen,  
Amber in maids' hands that's been,  
Dark Falernian from a jar  
When 'tis shattered—but afar,  
Hyblan bees o'er garden beds,  
Chaplets from rich feasters' heads,  
Altars, where the incense burns,  
Cosmus' alabaster urns—

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Why say more ? All fragrant scents,  
If you mingle their contents,  
Do no more than match the kiss  
Of my lover. What is this ?  
Want to know his name ? Ah, well,  
Swear that you will never tell.  
You say you've sworn already. That won't do.  
Methinks, my friend, you want too much to know.

### IX

#### *ON THE TOMB OF THE ACTOR MEMOR*

ENNOBLED by the poet's crown,  
Memor, the glory of the stage,  
Death may not vanquish thy renown,  
Art bids thee live from age to age.

### X

#### *ON TURNUS, BROTHER OF MEMOR*

FOR lighter verse is Turnus known,  
The tragic bays he would not claim ;  
Since these had Memor made his own,  
He would not mar a brother's fame.

### \* XI

#### *OLD FASHIONS ARE BEST*

OFF with these chaliced bowls from Nile's warm land  
And give me, boy, the mug with careless hand  
Which once my sires from close-cropped pages took,  
That so my board may have its ancient look.  
Sardanapallus, drink from jewelled cup,  
You who for women's pots broke Mentor up !

## BOOK ELEVEN

\* XII

### *TO ZOILUS*

TAKE, if you will, a ' father's right ' for seven,  
You who've no father nor yet mother even.

XIII

### *ON THE TOMB OF THE ACTOR PARIS*

STAY, traveller, and pass not by  
This noble monument unread,  
The city's darling here doth lie,  
Wit, art, and grace with him are fled  
And Rome doth mourn uncomforted.  
Lost is her dear delight and prize,  
For love and all desire are dead,  
Hid in the grave where Paris lies.

\* XIV

### *ON A DWARF'S TOMB*

HOB is too small to have a mound raised o'er him :  
One clod of earth would be too heavy for him.

\* XV

### *THE FESTIVE SEASON*

SOME books of mine old Cato's bride  
And sober Sabine dames might read ;  
This one throws gravity aside  
And is a very naughty screed.

It's wet with wine and feels no shame  
With Cosmian perfumes to be sprayed,  
It tells of Cupid's wanton game  
And boldly calls a spade a spade.

But so did Numa long ago ;  
And these loose verses, pray remember,  
Do not my life and manners show,  
They're meant to suit with gay December.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XVI

## *A WARNING TO PRUDES*

GRAVE reader, go—wherever you may please—  
I'm writing now for Roman cits at ease.  
This scroll is full of Priapean rhymes  
And sound of castanets from Spanish climes.  
Though you more stern than ancient Curius be  
You will be fired, methinks, if you read me.  
Yet modest maidens at this sportive book  
May in their cups perchance with favour look,  
And matrons hide it from their lords away—  
Meaning to finish it some other day.

XVII

## *TO SABINUS*

THOUGH for convivial hours my verse be fit  
Somewhat of sober thought doth lurk in it.

XVIII

## *TO LUPUS*

You gave me an estate near town, you say :  
My window-ledge provides a larger ! Nay,  
How can you dare to term it so to me ?  
One sprig of rue Diana's grove must be,  
A cricket's leg could shade it over quite,  
An ant despoil it in a single night,  
The tiniest rose-leaf cover it, and rare  
As *Cosmus'* nard is any herbage there ;  
A gherkin cannot lie at length ; though small  
And tightly coiled a snake can cover all ;  
A slug half-starved there is—the willow-bed  
Nurtured a gnat—the famished brute is dead ;  
A mole is ditcher—and he ploughs as well ;  
There was a mushroom but it could not swell ;  
The fig and violet, so cramped were they  
As not to open to the light of day ;  
A mouse is there, my bailiff dreads it more  
Than if it were the Calydonian boar ;

When ripe the crop, fell Procne down may flit  
 And in her nest may garner all of it ;  
 If it escape her ravening claws and bill,  
 An empty snail-shell it may chance to fill ;  
 Priapus' figure may not here abide,  
 Shorn of his staff, he could not get inside ;  
 Then for the wine, in place of cask or butt,  
 We store the vintage in a pitch-dressed nut ;  
 To call the place a field is quite absurd,  
 Take out or change two letters of the word,  
 Change L to E, omit the second letter,  
 And give me the result, 'twould suit me better.

\* XIX

*TO GALLA*

You ask why I will not a learned wife take ?  
 Too often a ' mentulae lapsus ' I make.

XX

*THE POET'S MODEL*

You carping knave who hate my frankness, note  
 These merry verses that Augustus wrote :  
 ' Since Fulvia's lord to Glycera transfers  
 His love, to me has Fulvia proffered hers ;  
 Must I be proxy then, or if he plead  
 Play Jove with Manius for a Ganymede.  
 " 'Tis love or war ", says Fulvia. Be it so  
 No hireling will I be. Blow, Trumpet, blow !'  
 So Caesar wrote—plain words and merry wit—  
 But when I follow, you object to it.

XXI

LYDIA tam laxa est equitis quam culus aeni,  
 Quam celer arguto qui sonat aere trochus,  
 Quam rota transmisso totiens inpacta petauro,  
 Quam uetus a crassa calceus udus aqua,  
 Quam quae rara uagos expectant retia turdos,  
 Quam Pompeiano uela negata Noto.

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Quam quae de pthisico lapsa est armilla cinaedo,  
Culcita Leuconico quam uiduata suo,  
Quam ueteres bracae Brittonis pauperis, et quam  
Turpe Rauennatis guttur onocrotali.  
Hanc in piscina dicor futuisse marina.  
Nescio ; piscinam me futuisse puto.

### XXII

MOLLIA quod niuei duro teris ore Galaesi  
Basia, quod nudo cum Ganymede iaces,  
(Quis negat ?) hoc nimiumst. Sed sit satis ; inguina saltem  
Parce fututrici sollicitare manu.  
Leuibus in pueris plus haec quam mentula peccat  
Et faciunt digiti praecipitantque uirum :  
Inde tragus celeresque pili mirandaque matri  
Barba, nec in clara balnea luce placent.  
Diuisit natura marem : pars una puellis,  
Una uiris genita est. Utere parte tua.

### \* XXIII

#### *THE UNWILLING BENEDICT*

UPON any conditions Dame Sila wants me,  
But upon no conditions her husband I'll be.  
When she pressed me I said—' I require from my wife  
Ten thousand as dowry, no less on my life.  
Moreover we'll sleep in a separate room  
And not e'en the first night to your bed shall I come.  
You will not interfere when my girl I embrace,  
And will send your own maid, if I ask, in your place.  
At dinner on different sides we'll recline,  
And the fringe of your shawl must not hang down on mine.  
One kiss in a month, and don't ask for another ;  
And then not as wife but as elderly mother.  
So if to these conditions you now will agree—  
You may get some one else for your husband, not me.'

### XXIV

#### *TO AN EXACTING PATRON*

WHILST I escort or see you home and hear  
Your endless babble with a servile ear,  
Praise everything you do, and laud your taste,  
How many epigrams have gone to waste !

## BOOK ELEVEN

Seems it a paltry thing to lose to-day  
What Romans read and strangers far away ?  
To knights and senators my lines appeal,  
These lawyers love and poets often steal ;  
And now much work has died still-born—'tis true  
I swear, my worthy friend,—and all through you ;  
Is this endurable, that to increase  
Your crowd of clients, half my work must cease ?  
Thus of my book a single page is done,  
Although it is a month since 'twas begun ;  
Such is the penalty of bards at Rome—  
They only do their work who dine at home.

### XXV

ILLA salax nimium nec paucis nota puellis  
Stare Lino desit mentula. Lingua, caue.

### \* XXVI

#### *LOVE'S FRUITION*

MY pleasant solace, my delightful care,  
Than whom no heart has ever been more dear,  
O give me first a kiss with wine-stained lip  
Before I take the cup wherefrom you sip ;  
And then if you will love's true joys bestow,  
Not Jove himself surpasses me, I trow.

### XXVII

#### *TO FLACCUS*

A MAN of adamant you surely are  
To love a dame who loves stale vinegar,  
A dame whose palate whelks and tripe enchant,  
Who thinks bananas too extravagant,  
Whose maid brings in (rare trove !) a common pot  
Of spoiled sardines to eat before they rot ;  
Grown lowish now and not afraid to shock  
She begs for flannelette to make a frock ;  
My dame will ask for attar, precious stuff,  
' *Worth* ' for her frocks is hardly good enough ;



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Fine graded pearls and emeralds I must find,  
And gold is copper to her generous mind.  
Is any mistress worth the cost? Oh no—  
And yet she ought to think I think her so.

## XXVIII

INUASIT medici Nasica phreneticus Eucti  
Et percidit Hylan. Hic, puto, sanus erat.

## XXIX

### TO PHYLLIS

TRYING to fan his passion into flame,  
You ancient dame, you choke a languid lover ;  
And when you call him many a pretty name,  
It takes him simply ages to recover.

That's not the way—such blandishments abjure—  
Offer him gold, a cellar, wine to fill it,  
Slaves, houses, gorgeous plate, and furniture,  
These may warm passion, your caresses chill it.

## XXX

Os male causidicis et dicis olere poetis.  
Sed fellatori, Zoile, peius olet.

## XXXI

### GOURDS

THOUGH Atreus, so the fable runs,  
Sliced up and cooked Thyestes' sons,  
Caecilius with humaner mind  
Plays Atreus with the pumpkin kind ;  
Hors d'oeuvres of gourd are offered you  
And gourd for courses one and two—  
Then comes a change? Oh no, you'll see  
Some sort of gourd for number three ;

## BOOK ELEVEN

Next for dessert—you then may take  
Compote of gourd and pumpkin cake,  
Insidious it must be confessed,  
Although the cook has done his best  
With pumpkin puffs and dates like those  
So popular in all the shows ;  
Then the mixed dishes, to one's view  
Lentil or beans, are pumpkin too.  
Mock mushrooms and mock tunny fin,  
Mock rissoles, mock sardines—within  
Are merely pumpkin pulp, and though  
All flavourings the cook doth know,  
Not rue nor any sauce can hide  
The fact that they are gourd inside ;  
Each dish, the greatest like the least,  
Is pumpkin ! This he calls a feast,  
Because he gives you courses many  
Which altogether cost one penny.

### XXXII

#### *TO NESTOR*

No coat or bed, however foul, you own,  
No mat of reeds, although a cheap and hard one,  
No slave or young or old, no child or crone,  
No cup, no bolt, no door, no dog, to guard one.

Yet you pretend—an idle stratagem—  
That you are poor, ah, vain, self-flattering fancy !  
Many are poor ; you cannot rank with them,  
Yours is not poverty but mendicancy.

### XXXIII

#### *THE GREEN CHARIOT*

How oft the green hath won ! 'Aye', envy saith,  
'By Nero's favour were the rest undone'.  
Doth Nero's favour then outlive his death ?  
For since he died more palms the green hath won !

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XXXIV

## *A GOOD NEIGHBOUR*

APER has bought a ruin foul  
Too grimy for the moping owl,  
A cunning rogue is he ;  
Hard by doth wealthy Maro dwell,  
So Aper looks to board right well,  
Though vile his lodging be.

XXXV

## *TO FABULLUS*

OF all the guests you ask to dine  
I know not one, so I decline ;  
Why should you grumble ? 'Tis not rude  
To hate a crowded solitude.

XXXVI

## *TO JULIUS PROCULUS*

JULIUS, a pearl should mark the day whereon  
Heaven gave you life in answer to my prayer ;  
Now joy is deeper for the dread that's gone,  
Less glad are they who never knew despair ;  
Hypnus, you sluggard, pour a vintage rare,  
This festal day my oldest cask may claim,  
And I would quaff and you, my slave, shall share  
A draught to every letter of his name.

XXXVII

## *FETTERS OF GOLD*

WHY gird a jewel with a pound of gold ?  
Poor Sardonyx, 'tis smothered I declare !  
Nay, Zoilus, a finger cannot bear  
The weight you bore upon your leg of old.

## XXXVIII

*HIS CONFIDANT*

HE bought a slave to drive his mule  
 And paid a thousand—what a fool !  
 The slave is deaf—all hearing gone—  
 The buyer was a Solomon !

## XXXIX

*TO HIS OLD TUTOR*

YOU rocked my cradle, were my boyhood's guide,  
 And faithful comrade ever at my side ;  
 And now my beard makes black the shaving-cloth  
 And these my bristles rouse my lady's wrath,  
 You think me still the child you used to chide,  
 My bailiff trembles, pale and terrified,  
 My roof, too, quakes when your reproof goes forth,  
 I'm only free to do what you decide.

So if I game or flirt, you mourn your woes ;  
 I use some scent, you scarce refrain from blows,  
 For that my father never used to do ;  
 So if I wear a cloak of Tyrian hue  
 Or drink a draught of wine, one might suppose  
 You had to pay. Bring grumbling to a close,  
 I hate a freedman who's a Cato too.  
 Am I a man you ask ? My lady knows.

\* XL

*A SAD CALAMITY*

LUPERCUS is beautiful Glycera's lover,  
 But for a whole month not one kiss he's had of her,  
 His passionate ardour to slake.  
 He goes about town in most sorrowful guise,  
 And to friendly inquirers he sadly replies—  
 ' I'm afraid that she has a toothache '.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLI

## *THE CAREFUL SWINEHERD*

YOUNG Amyntas considered his pigs extra fine,  
And was rather too anxious to pamper the swine,  
Till one day while shaking down acorns beneath  
He fell from the branches and so met his death.  
His father condemned the fell tree to the fire  
And burned all its wood on the funeral pyre.  
Let my neighbours insist that their pigs fattened be,  
If my man counts the herd, that's sufficient for me.

XLII

## *TO CAECILIANUS*

You ask for lively epigrams, but give  
Themes dull and dead—no art could make them live.  
If Attic bees were fed upon a field  
Of bitter herbs, what honey would they yield ?

XLIII

DEPRENSUM in puero tetricis me uocibus, uxor,  
Corripis et culum te quoque habere refers.  
Dixit idem quotiens lasciuo Iuno Tonanti !  
Ille tamen grandi cum Ganymede iacet.  
Incuruabat Hylan posito Tirynthius arcu :  
Tu Megaran credis non habuisse natis ?  
Torquebat Phoebum Daphne fugitiua : sed illas  
Oebalius flammis iussit abire puer.  
Briseis multum quamuis auersa iaceret,  
Acacidæ propior leuis amicus erat.  
Parce tuis igitur dare mascula nomina rebus  
Teque puta cunnos, uxor, habere duos.

XLIV

## *LEGACY-HUNTERS*

CHILDLESS and rich and of an age untold,  
Can these new friends be true as were the old  
When you were young ere wealth had come to you ?  
Nay, 'tis your will that's courted by the new.

## BOOK ELEVEN

### XLV

INTRASTI quotiens inscriptae limina cellae,  
Seu puer adrisit siue puella tibi,  
Contentus non es foribus ueloque seraque,  
Secretumque iubes grandius esse tibi :  
Oblinitur minimae si qua est suspicio rimae  
Punctaque lasciuia quae terebrantur acu.  
Nemo est tam teneri tam sollicitique pudoris  
Qui uel pedicat, Canthare, uel futuit.

### XLVI

IAM nisi per somnum non arrigis et tibi, Maeui,  
Incipit in medios meiere uerpa pedes,  
Truditur et digitis pannucea mentula lassis  
Nec leuat extinctum sollicitata caput.  
Quid miseros frustra cunnos culosque laccessis ?  
Summa petas : illic mentula uiuit anus.

### XLVII

OMNIA femineis quare dilecta cateruis  
Balnea deuitat-Lattara ? Ne futuat.  
Cur nec Pompeia lentus spatiat in umbra  
Nec petit Inachidos limina ? Ne futuat.  
Cur Lacedaemonio luteum ceromate corpus  
Perfundit gelida Virgine ? Ne futuat.  
Cum sic feminei generis contagia uitet,  
Cur lingit cunnum Lattara ? Ne futuat.

### \* XLVIII

#### *ON A MONUMENT ERECTED BY SILIUS AT VIRGIL'S GRAVE*

To Virgil's tomb this honour Silius pays,  
Who holds the lands where Cicero spent his days.  
As heir and owner of his home and grave  
None other Tully or Maro would have.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XLIX

## ON THE SAME

ONE humble hind remained the rites to pay  
To Maro's ashes where alone they lay :  
Silius resolved to help the abandoned shade  
And now his brother-poet comes to aid.

L

## WOMEN'S TRICKS

PHYLLIS, you rob me every day,  
It is my foolish love that lets you,  
The cunning, too, that you display,  
Wherein your lying maid abets you !

She hints of ring or mirror lost,  
Of scent all gone, or missing jewel,  
Or smuggled silk at trifling cost,  
To miss so rare a chance were cruel !

You need a cask of wine—the best—  
To help some witch's charm (or gullet ?),  
Or else an unexpected guest  
Has come and you want pike or mullet.

I pray you, Phyllis, show some small  
Regard for truth, and frankly use me,  
Remembering, if I give my all,  
Whate'er I ask you can't refuse me.

LI

TANTA est quae Titio columna pendet  
Quantam Lampsaciae colunt puellae.  
Hic nullo comitante nec molesto  
Thermis grandibus et suis lauatur,  
Anguste Titius tamen lauatur.

## LII

*TO JULIUS CERIALIS*

COME, Julius, share a pleasant meal with me,  
 If you should have no better occupation,  
 (We'll bathe together—keep the eighth hour free,  
 You know the bath adjoins my habitation),  
 Sliced leeks and wholesome lettuce there will be,  
 And tunny fry in happy combination  
 With rue and sauce of egg—I like it well  
 When rather larger than a mackerel.

Eggs also, poached upon a slack-wood fire,  
 Picenian olives touched by frost but lightly,  
 These first. Shall I tell more?—in my desire  
 To bring you, pardon my romancing slightly ;  
 My fish, birds, game, a gourmet might inspire,  
 A Stella's table does not see them nightly ;  
 No verse I'll read but you shall give me all  
 Your epic and Virgilian pastoral.

## LIII

*ON CLAUDIA RUFINA*

THOUGH from the painted Britons Claudia came,  
 Her noble soul befits the Roman race,  
 Her kinship dames of Italy might claim,  
 Greeks laud her beauty ; and by heaven's grace  
 Offspring she hath ; so ere her lovely face  
 Hath lost its youth, they too shall wed, and she  
 Loving her lord, in him shall ever place  
 Her trust, rejoicing in her children three.

## LIV

*TO ZOILUS*

You snatched that half-burned incense from the fire,  
 Stole cinnamon and nard from bier and pyre,  
 Your myrrh and cassia have tainted breath.  
 Restore, polluted knave, your spoils to Death ;  
 Small wonder that your hands have learned to cheat ;  
 Slave, runaway, they learned it from your feet.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LV

## *THE HYPOCRITE*

HE hopes that you may have a son, he says ;  
A silly lie, there's naught he wishes less ;  
This is the fortune-hunter's trick—he prays  
For what, if granted, would his soul distress ;  
Just watch the rascal blench if you profess  
That your Cosconia expects an heir ;  
And let your will suggest that all success  
(How he will rave !) attended on his prayer.

\* LVI

## *THE POOR PHILOSOPHER*

You want me, Chaeremon, your courage to praise  
Because you'd be glad of an end to your days.  
'Tis your poor broken pitchers this virtue create,  
Your bugs, and thin blankets, and fireless grate,  
Your bare truckle bedstead, and short scanty gown  
Which is worn all the day and at night on you thrown.  
You must be a marvellous hero indeed  
To give up your vinegar and straw and black bread.

Come, suppose that your pillow is stuffed with soft wool,  
And that over your couch close-clipped purple you pull,  
While you have by your side the fair page who at dinner  
Made each of your guests in his fancy a sinner.  
How then would you wish to be Nestor thrice over,  
And reasons for living each fresh day discover !  
It's easy in trouble this world to despise ;  
The brave man is he who endures miseries.

LVII

## *TO SEVERUS*

Do not wonder if I send  
Rhyme to greet a poet friend  
Who in learning doth transcend  
All I know.

## BOOK ELEVEN

As we offer at his shrine,  
Who is fed on food divine,  
Common meats and earthly wine,  
Even so

I may send it, may I not ?  
Though I cannot add a jot  
To the blessings you had got  
Long ago.

### LVIII

CUM me uelle uides tentumque, Telesphore, sentis,  
Magna rogas : puta me uelle negare : licet ?  
Et nisi iuratus dixi ' Dabo ', subtrahis illas,  
Permittunt in me quae tibi multa, natis.  
Quid si me tonsor, cum stricta nouacula supra est,  
Tunc libertatem diuitiasque roget ?  
Promittam ; neque enim rogat illo tempore tonsor,  
Latro rogat ; res est inperiosa timor :  
Sed fuerit curua cum tuta nouacula theca,  
Frangam tonsori crura manusque simul.  
At tibi nil faciam, sed lota mentula laeua  
*λαικάζειν* cupidae dicit auaritia.

### \* LIX

#### *THE IMPECUNIOUS DANDY*

SIX rings on each finger young Algernon wears,  
And keeps them all on in his bath, it appears,  
And when he is lying asleep of a night.  
' The reason ? He has not a ring-case ' ? That's right.

### LX

SIT Phlogis an Chione Veneri magis apta requiris ?  
Pulchrior est Chione ; sed Phlogis ulcus habet,  
Ulcus habet Priami quod tendere possit alutam  
Quodque senem Pelian non sinat esse senem ;  
Ulcus habet quod habere suam uult quisque puellam,  
Quod sanare Criton, non quod Hygia potest.  
At Chione non sentit opus nec uocibus ullis  
Adiuuat, absentem marmoreamue putes.  
Exorare, dei, si uos tam magna liceret  
Et bona uelletis tam pretiosa dare,  
Hoc quod habet Chione corpus faceretis haberet  
Ut Phlogis, et Chione quod Phlogis ulcus habet.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXI

LINGUA maritus, moechus ore Nanneius,  
Summemmianis inquinatio buccis ;  
Quem cum fenestra uidit a Suburana  
Obscena nudum Leda, fornicem cludit  
Mediumque mauult basiare quam summum ;  
Modo qui per omnes uiscerum tubos ibat  
Et uoce certa consciaque dicebat  
Puer an puella matris esset in uentre,  
(Gaudete cunni ; uestra namque res acta est)  
Arrigere linguam non potest fututricem.  
Nam dum tumentis mersus haeret in uolua  
Et uagientes intus audit infantes,  
Partem gulosam soluit indecens morbus.  
Nec purus esse nunc potest nec impurus.

## LXII

### *BOUGHT PLEASURES*

SHE never gives herself for love ? No doubt.  
She has to buy her loves or do without !

## LXIII

SPECTAS nos Philomuse cum lauamur,  
Et quare tibi tam mutuniati  
Sint leues pueri subinde quaeris.  
Dicam simpliciter tibi roganti :  
Pedicant, Philomuse, curiosos.

## LXIV

‘ YES ’

I KNOW not what you write to girls, and yet—  
I know the answer that you never get.

BOOK ELEVEN

LXV

*TO JUSTINUS*

TO-DAY your birthday board to grace  
You ask a horde of guests to dine.  
In other years an honoured place—  
And none disputed it—was mine ;  
You bid me come to-morrow ? Nay,  
Let ' friends,' with whom I am not classed,  
Observe the feast, but must I pay  
With presents for a feast that's past ?

\* LXVI

*TO VACERRA*

INFORMER, libel-monger, cut-throat, knave,  
Pander, to every loathsome vice a slave,  
Vacerra, it is marvellous that you  
With these resources are a pauper too.

LXVII

*TO MARO*

NAUGHT will you give me while you live ;  
You'll leave your wealth to me ?  
Then if you're sane, it must be plain  
What my desire will be.

LXVIII

*TO MATHO*

THE great refuse you little loans ? Then press  
For great ones, so refusal shames one less.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXIX

## ON A DOG'S GRAVE

TRAINED in the amphitheatre and found  
Ruthless in chase and yet a gentle hound,  
Lydia my name ; my lord had chosen me  
Before thy loyal friend, Erigone ;  
Or him who, following Cephalus afar  
From Dicte's land, became with him a star,  
The faithful hound that loved Dulichium's lord  
Was numbed, of lagging years, and age abhorred ;  
The flashing tusches of a slaving boar,  
Huge as the brute in Calydon of yore,  
Thrust me in youth to death. Shall I repine ?  
Nay for a nobler fate could not be mine.

\* LXX

## TO TUCCA

How can you endure to sell your poor boys ;  
Each cost you a thousand, these delicate toys.  
Do not their caresses your stubborn heart move,  
Their artless complaints, and the signs of their love.  
If you want ready money, there's land you can sell,  
Your house and your plate, cups and tables as well,  
Old slaves of your father's—I'm sure they won't mind—  
Nothing matters as long as the boys stay behind.  
It was reckless to buy them—that none will deny—  
But to sell them would recklessness greater imply.

LXXI

HYSTERICAM uetulo se dixerat esse marito  
Et queritur futui Leda necesse sibi ;  
Sed flens atque gemens tanti negat esse salutem  
Seque refert potius proposuisse mori.  
Uir rogat ut uiuat, uirides nec deserat annos,  
Et fieri quod iam non facit ipse sinit.  
Protinus accedunt medici medicaeque recedunt,  
Tollunturque pedes. O medicina grauis !

## BOOK ELEVEN

### LXXII

DRAUCI Natta sui uocat pipinnam,  
Conlatus cui Gallus est Priapus.

### \* LXXIII

#### *TO LYGDUS*

How often you've promised that to me you'd come,  
And fixed both the time and the place ;  
While I, all impatience, have waited at home,  
And ne'er got a glimpse of your face.  
What curse shall I ask on your shoulders be laid ?  
May you carry a one-eyed old lady's sunshade !

### LXXIV

CURANDUM penem commisit Baccara Raetus  
Riuali medico. Baccara Gallus erit.

### LXXV

THECA tectus ahenea lauatur  
Tecum, Caelia, seruus ; ut quid, oro,  
Non sit cum citharoedus aut choraules ?  
Non uis, ut puto, mentulam uidere.  
Quare cum populo lauaris ergo ?  
Omnes an tibi nos sumus spadones ?  
Ergo, ne uidearis inuidere,  
Seruo, Caelia, fibulam remitte.

### LXXVI

#### *A RICH CREDITOR*

You dun me for ten pounds I owe, and on the petty grounds  
That some one else has failed, and so you lose two hundred  
pounds,  
But why exact from me the dues unpaid by other men ?  
For if two hundred you can lose, why, you can lose the ten.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LXXVII

IN omnibus Vacerra quod conclauibus  
Consumit horas et die toto sedet,  
Cenaturit Vacerra, non cacaturit.

## LXXVIII

VTERE femineis complexibus, utere, Victor,  
Ignotumque sibi mentula discat opus.  
Flammea texuntur sponsae, iam uirgo paratur,  
Tondebit pueros iam nous nupta tuos.  
Pedicare semel cupido dabit illa marito,  
Dum metuit teli uulnera prima noui :  
Saepius hoc fieri nutrix materque uetabunt  
Et dicent : ' Vxor, non puer, ista tibi est ' .  
Heu quantos aestus, quantos patiere labores,  
Si fuerit cunnus res peregrina tibi !  
Ergo Suburanae tironem trade magistrae.  
Illa uirum faciet ; non bene uirgo docet.

## LXXIX

### *PETITE VITESSE*

'Twas evening ere I got a mile from town,  
Yet I am not the sluggard that you thought me.  
To your account the fault is written down ;  
Remember, Paetus, 'twas your mules that brought me !

## LXXX

### *THE CHARMS OF BAIÆ*

BAIÆ is happy Venus' golden shore,  
Nature's alluring gift, her joy and pride,  
And, though a thousand verses I should pour,  
Yet must I leave her beauty half-belied.  
Is Julius there ? Nay, Fortune should deride  
My greed if I should pray to meet him there ;  
And yet might heaven that double boon provide  
Julius *and* Baiæ—what a joy it were !

## BOOK ELEVEN

### LXXXI

CUM sene communem uexat spado Dindymus Aeglen  
Et iacet in medio sicca puella toro.  
Uiribus hic, operi non est hic utilis annis :  
Ergo sine effectu prurit utrique labor.  
Supplex illa rogat pro se miserisque duobus,  
Hunc iuuenem facias, hunc, Cytherea, uirum.

### \* LXXXII

#### *THE WINE-BIBBER*

A GUEST, going home to his lodging at night,  
Had near Sinuessa an unpleasant fright,  
For hurrying down a long stairway he fell,  
And all but joined hapless Elpenor in hell.  
He would never have fallen, ye Nymphs of the shrine,  
If he'd kept to your water and kept off the wine.

### LXXXIII

#### *PAYING GUESTS*

THE childless rich—and only they—  
For nothing may with Andrew stay—  
But, when he pockets large bequests,  
We see they're really paying guests.

### LXXXIV

#### *THE BARBER*

You would not feel Ixion's wheel or change with Sisyphus ?  
Oh then, beware the barber's chair of dread Antiochus !  
The frenzied crowd may cry aloud with howls delirious ;  
Their arms they slash—your deadly gash is worse, Antiochus.  
One may endure a surgeon's ' cure ' in fashion valorous,  
Or broken bone without a groan—but not Antiochus.  
'Twould take the crew of cynics who are most necessitous,  
Or else a horse, whose mane is coarse, to bear Antiochus.  
Though vultures tear Prometheus there upon the Caucasus,



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A ravening bird would be preferred to you, Antiochus.  
Pentheus would flee to Agavë, that mother infamous,  
Or Orpheus face the Maenad race—but not Antiochus.  
I've lost the skin from cheek and chin, the cause would you  
discuss ?

It was not strife or frenzied wife—it was Antiochus !  
Old pugilists from other's fists are oft disfigured thus ;  
But I am marred and mauled and scarred all by Antiochus.  
The goat alone hath wisdom shown, more sensible than us,  
He grew a beard because he feared to meet Antiochus !

### LXXXV

SIDERE percussa est subito tibi, Zoile, lingua,  
Dum lingis. Certe, Zoile, nunc futuis.

### LXXXVI

#### *THE GREEDY PATIENT*

To heal your throat and give your cough relief  
The doctor put you on a pleasant diet,  
Sweet kernels, honey, cakes—the things, in brief,  
We give to noisy boys to keep them quiet.  
That cough goes on—the treatment seems no use for it—  
'Tis greed, my friend, and coughing the excuse of it !

### LXXXVII

DIUES erat quondam : sed tunc pedico fuisti  
Et tibi nulla diu femina nota fuit.  
Nunc sectaris anus. O quantum cogit egestas !  
Illa fututorem te, Charideme, facit.

### LXXXVIII

MULTIS iam, Lupe, posse se diebus  
Pedicare negat Charisianus.  
Causam cum modo quaerent sodales,  
Uentrem dixit habere se solutum.

## BOOK ELEVEN

\* LXXXIX

*TO POLLA*

WHY give me garlands that you've never fingered ?  
Send rather roses where your hands have lingered.

XC

*TO CHRESTILLUS*

SMOOTH verse you hate, but love the kind  
That tumbles over crags linguistic ;  
Milton is weaker to your mind  
Than any babbler archaistic.

You set up rugged word and phrase  
For imitation—'twould not hurt you  
If, like the ancients whom you praise,  
You too adopted rugged virtue.

\* XCI

*ON THE TOMB OF A CHILD WHO DIED OF CANCER*

POOR Canacë lies buried in this tomb,  
A child whose seventh winter scarce had come.  
O shame, O monstrous crime ! Yet, stranger, hear ;  
'Tis not for life cut short we shed this tear.  
Than death itself more cruel was death's guise,  
The cancerous growth that spread before our eyes  
And did at last so eat her lips away  
That half-consumed upon the pyre they lay.  
If 'twere decreed that death should come so soon,  
Some other way the fell deed had been done.  
But lest her plaintive cries the gods should reach  
Fate closed the channel of her baby speech.

XCII

*THE EPITOME*

HE said you were a vicious man ? He lied :  
You're not a man, you're vice personified.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

XCIII

## *THE GODS' MISTAKE*

A POET'S house consumed by fire !  
Phoebus and ye, the heavenly choir,  
What vengeance will ye now require  
For such a fell disaster ?

How foul a deed, how black a shame !  
Can men acquit the gods of blame  
When they delivered to the flame  
The house and not its master ?

XCIV

## *TO AN ENVIOUS JEW RIVAL*

OF course you envy all I write or do,  
But that is pardonable in a Jew ;  
You steal the verse you sneer about ; this too  
Is naught and shows some wisdom for a Jew.  
But now you dare my loved one to pursue,  
Must I endure that insult from a Jew ?  
You swear by Jove you do not ? That's untrue :  
Swear by your Syrian gods, you perjured Jew !

XCV

INCIDERIS quotiens in basia fellatorum,  
In solium puta te mergere, Flacce, caput.

XCVI

## *ON A GERMAN WHO DROVE A ROMAN BOY FROM THE MARCIAN AQUEDUCT*

THIS is the Marcian stream ; afar  
Doth flow your native Rhine ;  
Yet from the fount you dare debar  
One of the victor's line !

His is the free, the conquering race,  
 And, slave, although you thirst,  
 Our Roman pool should it abase  
 To serve a German first.

XCVII

VNA nocte quater possum : sed quattuor annis  
 Si possum, peream, te, Telesilla, semel.

XCVIII

*THE FOND SALUTE*

THERE'S no chance to escape from the kissers of Rome,  
 They meet you and cross you and follow you home,  
 They will hurry in hundreds from every place,  
 No salve-besmeared lips and no pimple-decked face,  
 Sore cheek or raw chin, will preserve you from those,  
 Though an icicle click at the end of your nose.  
 Be it cold, be it hot, or whatever betide,  
 They will steal the best kiss you had kept for your bride ;  
 You can wrap up your head in a hood of stout leather,  
 Or curtain your litter—that fails altogether ;  
 Through smallest of crevices kissers can crawl.  
 Will the dignified consul escape ? Not at all.  
 No, the tribune and he, though the lictors resist  
 With rod and with voice, will be certainly kissed ;  
 If you sit in the lofty tribunal and there  
 You administer law in the emperor's chair,  
 You may think, it may be, that you're safe for the time—  
 But no ; to that altitude kissers can climb.  
 Nor is fever—or mourning—a valid excuse ;  
 You can swim out to sea, but you'll find it no use ;  
 Is there then no escape ? Yes, one chance may exist :  
 Make friends with the kissers—you'll cease to be kissed.

XCIX

DE cathedra quotiens surgis (iam saepe notau),  
 Pedicant miserae, Lesbia, te tunicae.  
 Quas cum conata es dextra, conata sinistra  
 Uellere, cum lacrimis eximis et gemitu :  
 Sic constringuntur magni Symplegade culi  
 Et nimias intrant Cyaneasque natis.  
 Emendare cupis uitium deforme ? Docebo :  
 Lesbia, nec surgas censeo nec sedeas.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

C

## *THE HAPPY MEAN*

FLACCUS, no scraggy maid for me  
To whom a finger-ring would be  
A bracelet, one whose hip and knee  
    Might prick like any pin.  
A jagged saw-like spine I shun,  
And yet I do not like a ton  
Of solid blubber, give me one  
    Who's neither fat nor thin.

\* CI

## *TO FLACCUS*

JANE is so thin that if, as you declare,  
You see her, you can see what is not there.

CII

## *TO LYDIA*

THEY told me you were lovely—yes,  
    The word is true, the judgment just,  
While you are silent, motionless  
    As pictured form or waxen bust ;  
    Your speech turns love to sheer disgust.  
Your face it mars, your charm it balks ;  
    Beware the aedile, all mistrust  
The omen if a statue talks.

\* CIII

## *TO SAFRONIUS*

So modest are you both in looks and life,  
I wonder how you ever knew your wife.

## CIV

VXOR, uade foras aut moribus utere nostris :  
 Non sum ego nec Curius nec Numa nec Tatius.  
 Me iucunda iuuant tractae per pocula noctes :  
 Tu properas pota surgere tristis aqua.  
 Tu tenebris gaudes : me ludere teste lucerna  
 Et iuuat admissa rumpere luce latus.  
 Fascia te tunicaeque obscuraque pallia celant :  
 At mihi nulla satis nuda puella iacet.  
 Basia me capiunt blandas imitata columbas :  
 Tu mihi das auiae qualia mane soles.  
 Nec motu dignaris opus nec uoce iuuare  
 Nec digitis, tamquam tura merumque pares :  
 Masturbabantur Phrygii post ostia serui,  
 Hectoreo quotiens sederat uxor equo,  
 Et quamuis Ithaco stertente pudica solebat  
 Illic Penelope semper habere manum.  
 Pedicare negas : dabat hoc Cornelia Graccho,  
 Iulia Pompeio, Porcia, Brute, tibi ;  
 Dulcia Dardanio nondum miscente ministro  
 Pocula, Iuno fuit pro Ganymede Ioui.  
 Si te delectat grauitas, Lucretia toto  
 Sis licet usque die ; Laida nocte uolo.

\* CV

*TO GARRICUS*

YOUR present last year weighed exactly a pound,  
 But I see it's a quarter to-day :  
 Your system of reckoning's very unsound ;  
 At least, sir, a half you should pay.

## CVI

*TO VIBIUS MAXIMUS*

IF you have leisure, glance at this quatrain ;  
 You busy men shirk labour when you can,  
 So skip the rest and I shall not complain ;  
 You skip this too ? That is the wiser plan.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

CVII

## *TIT FOR TAT*

You brought me back my book, read through I know,  
'Twas all unrolled ; the evidence assures  
My mind and I believe it : aye, just so,  
' I lost no time in reading five of yours ' !

CVIII

## *A HINT*

THOUGH so lengthy a book should your taste satisfy,  
You have asked me for more : but my household will cry  
For some food, and the usurer's drained me quite dry ;  
So reader . . . you see what I mean to imply ?  
You are silent and don't understand me ? Good bye !

BOOK TWELVE





## BOOK TWELVE

### PREFACE

#### VALERIUS MARTIALIS to his friend PRISCUS GREETING

*I am aware that I owe you some sort of defence against a charge of most obstinate indolence persisting for three years, an indolence which could not be condoned even in one immersed in the engagements of city life, in which we more easily succeed in being a nuisance to our friends than an assistance to them. Still less is it excusable when one lives in this provincial desolation in which, unless a man spend his time in actually excessive study, he has no consolation nor any excuse for having run away from Rome.—Hear then my verses, wherein the chief and primary point is that I miss that cultured city audience to which I was accustomed, and feel as though I were conducting a lawsuit in a foreign court: for if there be anything pleasing in my books it is my hearers who put it there.*

*That critical delicacy, that inspiration drawn from one's surroundings, the libraries, theatres, and associations with men wherein pleasure learns without feeling that it is learning, those things, in a word, which I left in a mood of fastidiousness, I long for now, as though I were deserted. Besides this, there is the backbiting, typical of provincials; the envy that takes the place of balanced judgment; and the fact that, in a paltry little place like this, one or two malicious persons are as bad as a host elsewhere.—In the face of this, it is not easy always to maintain good-humour; you need not wonder, therefore, that I abandon in disgust occupations which I used to follow with relish. But now you are coming from Rome and you ask me for my work, and that I might not meet you with a refusal—although, in giving you all I can, I am by no means clearing my debt of gratitude to you—I laid upon myself as a duty the task I used to perform as a pleasure, and devoted just a few days to it, so that I might spread, as it were, a welcoming banquet before your ears which are always so very friendly to me. I only desire for these verses, which with you alone run no risk of disapproval, that you weigh their merits carefully and examine them without reluctance—also (though this is very difficult in your case) that in dealing with my trifles you will put aside all the glamour of friendship, lest I should send to Rome—that is if you decide that I ought to send—a book that not only comes from the provinces, but is utterly provincial.*



## BOOK TWELVE

### I

#### *AN IDLE HOUR*

WHEN you hear no music from baying hound,  
When the woods are still and no boar is found,  
And the nets afford no sport,  
Let my little book have an hour with you,  
For in less than that can you read it through,  
Though a winter hour be short.

### \* II

#### *TO HIS BOOK*

YE verses that to Pyrgi once would go,  
Follow the Sacred Way not dusty now.

### III

#### *BACK TO ROME*

FROM Rome of old to many a foreign land  
You went, my little book, but now set forth to Rome.  
From Salo's bank and Tagus' golden strand  
The native stream of mine ancestral home.

Not wholly strange nor all unknown are you,  
For Remus' lofty town knows well your kin ;  
Seek as of right the fane now built anew,  
Is not the Muses' shrine restored therein ?

Or if to Stella's dwelling you would fare,  
Seek the Subura where it climbs the hill ;  
My consul has his bay-decked dwelling there  
And quaffs the waters of Ianthe's rill,

A lordly fountain cool and glassy clear—  
The holy nine oft drink there, so 'tis said—  
Through him your verse the citizens shall hear.  
By knights and senators shall you be read.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## IV

### *TO PRISCUS TERENCE*

A SIMPLE knight, but one of kingly line,  
To Horace, Varius, and the mighty seer,  
Was help and stay of old : and you are mine,  
As in the years long hence the world shall hear,  
For fame shall tell it and my ageing page ;  
Through you my inspiration came to me,  
And power—if power I have—and in my age  
Such days of leisure as befit the free.

## V

### *TO THE EMPEROR NERVA, WITH A SELECTION OF POEMS*

MY book was longer than was fit,  
This new edition shortens it,  
And many verses I omit,  
So this is my petition—  
Let idle folk the larger choose,  
And he who toils for us peruse  
The shorter—he may not refuse  
Some day the full edition.

## VI

### *TO NERVA*

Now Nerva kindest of lords, doth reign,  
To range on Helicon no more we dread,  
Fair faith and Clemency return again  
And tempered Might—but trembling Fear hath fled ;  
O loyal Rome, thy Tribes and peoples pray  
That Nerva and his like may reign always !

Hail to that noble soul, as Numa's pure,  
Like Cato's—could a cheerful Cato be ;  
Hail to that generous hand that aids the poor,  
Nay, heaven itself is not more kind than he :  
In evil days no evil stained his mind,  
Ruled by a cruel prince he dared be kind.

## BOOK TWELVE

### VII

#### *THE KEY-NUMBER*

IF in the total number of her hairs we have a key,  
We are surely right in saying that Ligeia's age is three.

### \* VIII

#### *TO TRAJAN*

WHEN Rome, the goddess of all men and lands,  
To whom no equal and no second stands,  
Counted the years for Trajan that remain  
Through many ages, and beheld again  
One who was young and valiant and beside  
A mighty captain, glorying she cried—  
'Come, Parthian chiefs, ye Seric leaders come,  
Ye Thracians and ye Britons troop to Rome,  
Come, Sauromatians, and ye Getae too,  
I have a Caesar now to show to you'.

### \* IX

#### *TO TRAJAN*

PALMA is ruler now of our dear Spain  
And his mild sway gives peace across the main.  
O kindly emperor, grateful should we be  
Who sendest to us manners like to thee.

### X

#### *ON AFRICANUS*

ALTHOUGH he is an millionaire,  
He courts the rich who lack an heir ;  
Fortune gives much to many a one,  
But just enough she grants to none.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XI

### *TO PARTHENIUS*

Go forth my Muse, salute my friend and thine  
Who oft has drunk of thy Pierian spring,  
From out thy cave no clearer lyre doth ring  
Than his ; and Phoebus loves him, and the Nine ;  
Is he at leisure for thy songs and mine ?  
Fond hope ! give him our humble offering  
To lay before the Prince ; four words it needs ;  
Let him say only ' This thy city reads '.

## \* XII

### *TO POLLIO*

YOU'RE lavish with promises after a bout  
Of drinking that lasts all the night ;  
But when in the morning your friends meet you out,  
There's never a penny in sight.  
I wish that sometimes you'd get drunk in the day,  
And then what you promise perhaps you would pay.

## XIII

### *TO AUCTUS*

THE rich feign wrath—a profitable plan ;  
'Tis cheaper far to hate than help a man.

## \* XIV

### *LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP*

BE careful, Priscus, with your dashing steed ;  
Such haste against poor hares you do not need.  
Oft will the huntsman to his prey atone,  
And thrown to earth find all his hunting done.  
E'en level ground a rider may ensnare  
Though neither ditch nor mound nor stones be there.  
Others in plenty may enjoy their fling  
Whose death on Fate would not such odium bring ;  
But if to deeds of valour you must soar,  
Let us with safer courage hunt the boar.  
Why this rash riding ? If you are not stopped  
You'll find that you, and not the hares, are chopped.

## BOOK TWELVE

### XV

#### *DOMITIAN'S PALACE OPENED*

SEE, given to the gods, before our eyes  
The glittering gems a Nero used to prize,  
And Jupiter doth marvel to behold  
The emerald's lambent flame upon the gold,  
The costly gauds that for a tyrant's whim  
A ruined world must buy and give to him,  
The jewelled goblets fit to grace the board  
Where Ganymede doth serve Olympus' lord ;  
Trajan enriches Jupiter, and we  
Henceforth may live from dread exactions free,  
That erst had robbed and burdened every home  
And—shame upon it—spoiled the shrines of Rome !

### XVI

ADDIXTI, Labiene, tres agellos ;  
Emisti, Labiene, tres cinaedos.  
Pedicas, Labiene, tres agellos.

### XVII

#### *THE RICH INVALID*

FEVER abides with you too long, you say ;  
That guest, whose lengthy visits you deplore,  
Loves drives, luxurious bathing day by day,  
And for his dinner, mushrooms, oysters, boar ;  
Loves getting drunk—and you have ample store  
Of wines, and always iced !—he loves display  
Of rose-wreaths, essences, and hangings gay,  
And downy beds like yours he doth adore ;  
So, Dives, if you choose to treat him thus,  
Why should he leave to live with Lazarus ?

### XVIII

#### *TO JUVENAL, ON THE PLEASURES OF SPAIN*

AH, friend, while you are trudging still  
The noisy streets as heretofore,  
Or toiling up Diana's hill,  
Or waiting at a patron's door,



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

How hot your toga seems, how high  
To heavy feet the Coelian !  
For me such ills are past, for I  
Am just a country gentleman ;

And here in Bilbilis, that yields  
Rich gold and iron, lies my home,  
Gaily I till Boterdum's fields  
(How strange our names must sound in Rome !)

All night I sleep, and steal from day  
Three hours or more ; for those arrears  
Long overdue would I repay—  
The debt that ran for thirty years.

The toga is an unknown thing,  
And, should I ask new clothes to wear,  
'Tis likely that my slave would bring  
The cover from an old armchair.

Then blazing oak-logs welcome me,  
The forest skirts my pleasant cot,  
Which cook (my bailiff's wife is she)  
Has crowned with many a hissing pot.

My close-shorn bailiff I receive ;  
The boys, he thinks, their duty shirk :  
He's jealous and he wants my leave  
To crop their locks and make them work.

My keeper next, a comely boy,  
His beauty would delight your eye.  
This is the life I now enjoy  
Thus ever would I live and die.

### XIX

#### *THE PICNIC*

LIGHT refreshments at the Baths we see Aemilius buying ;  
So when he says he's dining out, we know he isn't lying.

## BOOK TWELVE

XX

### *THE ALTERNATIVE*

You wonder how he lives unmarried ? Cease  
To marvel, for his Reverence has a niece.

XXI

### *TO MARCELLA*

Who could believe, Marcella, that your home  
Was this rude land ? Such beauty doth adorn  
Your lovely soul, the court of royal Rome,  
Hearing your voice, would claim you Roman born ;  
No high-bred city dame should ever scorn  
Or ever rival you, a form so rare  
Surpasses all, though beauty gathers there  
From every land. Ah Rome ! I longed for thee ;  
Now I shall pine and grieve no more, for where  
Marcella dwells, that spot is Rome to me.

\* XXII

### *THE BEAUTY*

ONE-EYED Nan is so ugly, I'm sure you will own  
She would be better looking if both eyes were gone.

XXIII

### *TO A LADY WHO HAS JUST LOST HER EYE*

FALSE hair and teeth you're not ashamed to buy ;  
What will you do, my dear, about your eye ?

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XXIV

### *ON RECEIVING A PRESENT OF A TRAVELLING-CARRIAGE*

WHAT gift could be more pleasant than  
This carriage, sent by Aelian,  
A cosy gig, more private far  
Than curricles or coaches are ?  
Here we can talk, a friend and I,  
Of what we will, nor dread a spy ;  
No groom, no negro coachman's near,  
No footman cocks a prying ear,  
The cobs are sure to be discreet,  
And what they hear they won't repeat ;  
I would Avitus were a third  
With us, for what he overheard  
Would matter nothing, were he nigh  
How fast the happy day would fly.

## XXV

### *TO TELESINUS*

I ASKED a friendly loan, but you had got  
No money, till I pledged my garden plot !  
And so it came to this that you would lend  
To trees and cabbages, but not a friend.  
Now, charged with treason, you appeal to me :  
Why should I help you ? Go and ask a tree !  
Will I go with you if you're banished ? No.  
Invite the cabbages you trusted so.

## XXVI

### *EQUAL PAY*

ALTHOUGH a Senator, you do not scorn  
To court the great, while I, a knight abjure it ;  
But when I trudge the streets from early morn,  
'Tis but for idle greetings I endure it ;  
You seek the consulate or would adorn  
A post as governor, and you secure it,  
I will not cheat my sleep and face the mire too.  
Is that so lazy ? What could I aspire to ?

## BOOK TWELVE

Must I escort you till my toes shall peer  
Through broken shoes, or face in desperation  
The sudden storm (one's slave is never near  
In such a case) to win the invitation  
Your servant whispers in my frozen ear ?  
Your dinner too ? I'd rather face starvation ;  
You get a province, I a dinner ? Nay,  
For equal work let us have equal pay.

### XXVII

A LATRONIBUS esse te fututam  
Dicis, Saenia : sed negant latrones.

### XXVIII

#### TO CINNA

I DRAIN but a cup, while you empty a beaker ;  
And yet you complain that your tipples is weaker.

### XXIX

#### HERMOGENES

MASSA was bold in stealing gold—and yet Hermogenes,  
Our napkin thief, in my belief, surpasses him with ease ;  
You watch his wrist and seize his fist, or tie it up or knot it,  
And yet anon, your napkin's gone—Hermogenes has got it !  
So Iris may charm rain away, though heavy storm-clouds  
lower,  
Or stags at will draw serpents chill, by their mysterious power ;  
The arena's crowd once cried aloud to save a man alive  
And kerchiefs waved—ere he was saved, Hermogenes got five ;  
When in his place to start a race the praetor had to stop,  
His kerchief white was gone from sight, ere it had time to  
drop ;  
The folk of Rome now leave at home their kerchiefs, for they  
dread  
Hermogenes who, lacking these, takes table-cloths instead ;  
If none be there he'll even dare to steal more bulky things,  
Though tightly stitched he's oft unhitched the sofa coverings ;  
In summer's heat the sun may beat on people at the shows ;  
Despite the glare, if he be there, away the awning goes ;



## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

Or should he be on wharf or quay, a panic will prevail,  
The sailors haste—no time they waste in furling every sail ;  
It frightens, too, great Isis' crew ; her shaveling devotees  
Are linen clad, they run like mad before Hermogenes.  
All folk agree wherever he may dine, there's not a doubt,  
When dinner's done he'll leave with one although he came  
without.

XXX

### *ON APER*

HE's sober and abstemious ? One commends  
These qualities in slaves, but not in friends.

XXXI

### *MARCELLA'S GIFT*

THE grove, the woven shade of arching vine,  
The streams, the runnels in their conduit clear,  
Fields, roses—Paestum's hardly vie with mine—  
The herbs that never know a winter drear,  
The pond that teems with eels, the dovecote there,  
All snowy-white, for whiter doves a shrine,  
My lady gave when I returned to Spain  
After long years ; Pheacia's realm divine  
Nausicaa should offer me in vain :  
'Tis in Marcella's I would choose to reign.

XXXII

### *MOVING DAY*

VACERRA, when you moved on quarter-day  
I saw your household goods, a foul display—  
Most had been seized for two years' rent unpaid—  
Borne by your wife, a carrot-headed jade,  
—Seven hairs were left to prove the fact, no less—  
Your sister, hideous, blousy giantess,  
Trudged with the hag, your mother (truth to tell  
I thought them furies coming up from hell).

## BOOK TWELVE

You followed them, a starveling pinched with cold  
The very tint of boxwood bleached and old ;  
Irus are you, the type of pauperdom,  
Your goods the fitting extract of a slum,  
Three legs the bedstead owned, the table two,  
Item a lantern, scarce a ray comes through,  
Item a dirty pot and earthen bowl,  
(The former cracked and dripping through a hole),  
Item a brazier, with mould 'tis green,  
Embracing which a battered crock is seen,  
Item a jar whose ancient fish-like smell  
Proclaims that there anchovies used to dwell,—  
A dried-up fish-pool thus insults the breeze—  
Nor was there lacking rinds of rotten cheese,  
Or wreaths of flea-bane, stale and mouldering,  
Garlic or onions dropping from the string,  
Item some resin—this your mother owns—  
An aid to beauty used by gutter crones ;  
Why are you ' moving house ' ? It seems to me  
Such families as yours should live rent free :  
Don't mock house-agents ; for your household stuff  
The arches of the bridge are good enough.

### XXXIII

UT pueros emeret Labienus uendidit hortos.  
Nil nisi ficetum nunc Labienus habet.

### XXXIV

#### *TO JULIUS MARTIALIS*

DEAR Julius, four-and-thirty years have flown  
Since first our love began, and we have known  
Delight and mingled sorrow through them all ;  
Does not the joy for all the grief atone ?

You doubt it ? Set aside the pearls that mark  
The happy days, and by them set the dark  
Dull stones that stand for sorrow ; reckon all ;  
Which are the more ? Yet life is stern and stark,

And would you guard against its bitterness,  
Its sharpest pangs of grief ? Let none possess  
The very heart and soul of you, for then  
Joy may be marred but sorrow shall be less.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* XXXV

## TO CALLISTRATUS

As though you were really the frankest of men  
You talk of your amours, the how, why and when.  
You are not as frank as you'd have me believe,  
For a lad who says so much hides more up his sleeve.

XXXVI

## TO A STINGY PATRON

BECAUSE you send a needy friend a pound of plate—or less—  
A coat threadbare or cape to wear—is that free-handedness ?  
Because a few gold pieces too (how pleasantly they chink)  
You sometimes sent—'tis two months' rent—you're liberal,  
you think.  
The rest, 'tis true, give less than you, but generous you are  
not,  
What are you then ? 'Mid meaner men the best of a bad lot ;  
Piso I knew, and Crispus too, while yet their fortune stood,  
Compared with such you would be much the worst of all the  
good ;  
Let any steed who boasts of speed our thoroughbreds outpace :  
'Tis small applause you get because you win a donkey-race !

\* XXXVII

## THE CRITICAL SENSE

WHEN we say of a critic—' What wonderful *flair* '  
We don't to his out-size in noses refer.

\* XXXVIII

## TO CANDIDUS

THERE'S a fellow just now too well-known about town,  
Whom in sedan-chairs we see borne up and down,  
With hair black and oily, in bright purple dressed,  
Smooth legs, wanton eyes, and a broad hairless breast.  
You might think with your wife he some mischief will plan ;  
But you need not be frightened—he is not a man.

## BOOK TWELVE

XXXIX

### *THE PRETTY FELLOW*

I KNOW your name is Prettyman ; but then,  
My Prettyman, I hate all pretty men,  
For pretty petty poppets are accurst,  
And of the lot you, Prettyman, are worst.  
'Twere pretty conduct should you grant one boon—  
Fade Prettyman, and do it pretty soon !

\* XL

### *TO PONTILIANUS*

I DRINK when you're drinking, I sing when you sing,  
I praise your poor verse, I believe anything,  
You beat me at draughts, and I feign not to hear  
When the sound of your wind strikes me full in the ear.  
And yet for all this I get nothing. You say—  
' There's my will '. I don't want it—but please pass away.

\* XLI

### *TO TUCCA*

IT does not suffice you to *be* a gourmet :  
You want to be known and to hear what men say.

\* XLII

### *A FASHIONABLE MARRIAGE*

As when a virgin joins a husband's side,  
So Afer took Callistratus for bride.  
The torches shone, his face was hid by veil,  
Nor did the marriage song—' Talassus '—fail.  
A dowry too was given, and men say  
Rome now is waiting for accouchement-day.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XLIII

FACUNDOS mihi de libidinosi  
Legisti nimium, Sabelle, uersus,  
Quales nec Didymi sciunt puellae  
Nec molles, Elephantidos libelli.  
Sunt illic Veneris nouae figurae,  
Quales perditus audeat fututor,  
Praestent et taceant quid exoleti,  
Quo symplegmate quinque copulentur,  
Qua plures teneantur a catena,  
Extinctam liceat quid ad lucernam.  
Tanti non erat esse te disertum.

## XLIV

### TO UNICUS

I HAIL you kinsman both in blood and heart,  
For kin we are alike in soul and aim ;  
You might have matched your brother's loftier art,  
But, for his love, that palm you will not claim ;  
Aye, Lesbia might have loved you and your fame  
Have lured Corinna ; but an humbler part  
You chose and still, for brother-love, you deign  
To hug the shore who might have sailed the main !

## \* XLV

### TO PHOEBUS

YOUR temples and bald-pated crown are quite hid  
By a skilful contraption of close-fitting kid.  
A wit passing by made a charming *bon mot*—  
' By Jingo, the man's got his head in a shoe '.

## XLVI

### THE BUSINESS SENSE

GALLUS has sold his songs ! How can you then  
Maintain that poets are not business men ?

## BOOK TWELVE

### XLVII

#### *THE DIFFICULT CHOICE*

CAPTIOUS, yet kind ; pleasant but testy too ;  
I cannot bear to part, or live with you.

### XLVIII

#### *HIGH LIVING*

I WILLINGLY accept your dainty fare  
If hospitality be undesigning ;  
Not so, if you imagine that I care  
For nothing in the world so much as dining ;  
A dozen oysters will not make you heir  
To my reputed wealth for which you're pining ;  
The feast is elegant ; that I admit  
But on the morrow what is left of it ?

Upon the morrow ? Where is it to-day  
The moment after it has passed your gullet ?  
The broken gobbets all are swept away  
By dirty mops, and pork and hare and mullet  
Become to dogs and scavengers a prey,  
And you to gout—and who can cure or lull it ?  
A yellow, pasty face, and tortured feet,  
These are the legacies of dainty meat.

Will richest priestly banquets pay for these ?  
Were nectar offered me I should esteem it,  
At such a cost, mere vinegar, the lees  
Of doctored Vatican ; and do you deem it  
A likely thing that fare of yours could please  
My palate and ensnare me ? Do not dream it :  
To me a simple, friendly board is best,  
I love the fare I too can give a guest.

### XLIX

#### *THE WARDROBE-KEEPER*

RICH is the mistress who commits  
To you her dainty favourites,  
Besides her plate and jewels rare  
The curly darlings are your care ;

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

And, Linus, may she always trust  
And think of you as true and just ;  
But, Linus, hear me when I pray  
And for one moment turn away ;  
For I am frenzied with desire,  
My very heart and soul afire,  
For those dear things—I cannot rest  
But long to hug them to my breast,  
Those lovely snowy, perfect—girls ?  
Oh no, I mean those perfect pearls !

L

### *SPLENDID ISOLATION*

You own a spacious bath that none may share,  
And groves of bay and plane and towering pine,  
A hundred-pillared portico, where shine  
Rich onyx pavements with their dusky glare,  
Drives where the clattering hoofs resound, and where  
The plashing streams and fountains leap in foam,  
But not a chamber for a guest is there—  
O gorgeous palace ! Splendid lack of home !

\* LI

### *TO AULUS*

It's no use to give friend Fabullinus the office :  
A good man, remember, is always a novice.

LII

### *ON THE GRAVE OF RUFUS*

PIERIA'S garland oft has decked his head,  
His eloquence the wondering forum knew,  
And now, Sempronia, though his life be fled,  
His very ashes glow with love of you.

Now, in Elysium is the story told  
And Helen marvels at your nobler heart,  
It was for love she fled her lord of old,  
You fled your lover, 'twas the fairer part.

## BOOK TWELVE

Aye, and this greater tale of Troy beguiles  
E'en Menelaus to forget the past ;  
For as he hears thereof he turns and smiles,  
Through you the Phrygian is forgiven at last.

When to the mansion of the blest you go,  
Sempronia, no shade shall rank above you,  
Such sorrow well Proserpina does know,  
And this, your tale, shall win the Queen to love you.

### LIII

#### *THE MISER*

THOUGH abundant wealth you own—  
Such a treasure few have known—  
Yet you sit and brood alone  
O'er your pelf ;  
Like the dragon coiled of old  
Round the Colchian fleece of gold,  
Every halfpenny you hold  
For yourself.  
To delude us you romance  
On your ' son's ' extravagance,  
You may cozen fools perchance,  
Though indeed  
You are right to say your ' son,'  
For your life had scarce begun  
Ere your soul begot you one,  
Namely greed.

\* LIV

#### *TO ZOILUS*

WITH your short stumpy feet and your eyes pink and blear,  
Your swarthy complexion and flaming red hair,  
If with these marks upon you, you could honest be,  
You would seem nothing less than a monstrosity.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## LV

GRATIS qui dare uos iubet, puellae,  
Insulsissimus inprobissimusque est.  
Gratis ne date, basiate gratis.  
Hoc Aegle negat, hoc auara uendit  
(Sed uendat : bene basiare quantum est !)  
Hoc uendit quoque nec leui rapina :  
Aut libram petit illa Cosmiani  
Aut binos quater a noua moneta,  
Ne sint basia muta, ne maligna,  
Ne clusis aditum neget labellis.  
Humane tamen hoc facit : recusat  
Gratis quae dare basium, sed unum,  
Gratis lingere non recusat Aegle.

## LVI

### *FULFILMENT*

YOU'RE often ill, that hapless friends  
May fête you when the danger's past ;  
Let the next fever make amends  
For former greed, and be your last.

## LVII

### *THE NOISES OF ROME*

WHY do I seek my poor Nomentan home  
And squalid hearth, my fields by drought oppressed ?  
Because I cannot find a place in Rome  
Where men as poor as I can sleep or rest.

At early dawn the schoolmasters begin,  
By nights the pastry-cooks no respite give,  
Smiths make the daylight hideous with their din  
Of clashing hammers. What a life to live !

Here is a money-changer ringing coins  
Upon his dirty counter—lazy cheat—  
Next door the Spanish goldsmith's shop adjoins,  
All day the glittering mallets thump and beat.

## BOOK TWELVE

Bellona's frenzied minions howl and rant,  
A bandaged sailor begs, a Jewish child,  
Taught by his mother, whines his lying cant,  
Blear-eyed match pedlars shout and drive me wild.

But who may count the noises of the Town  
That murder sleep? Nay, you could count as soon  
The clashing cymbal-strokes that try to drown  
The Colchian incantation to the moon.

But, Sparsus, you can never know such ills,  
Softly you lie and lapped in rustic peace,  
Your lowest room is far above our hills,  
Long ere they reach you noise and clamour cease.

A country house within the city bounds  
Your labourers can live within the wall—  
With vineyards rich and drives and spacious grounds,  
All these are yours and quiet sleep withal.

At will the glaring sunlight you exclude,  
Rome throngs about my bed, I start from sleep  
To tramping footsteps and to laughter rude,  
Till, wearied, to my country cot I creep.

### LVIII

#### *A PRETTY PAIR*

SAYS your wife with a sneer, ' You're the lady-maid's dear ',  
And she mocks at your conduct as shady ;  
But well-matched you must be ; ' tis notorious that she  
Is the gentleman's gentleman's lady !

### LIX

#### *GREETINGS*

THREE lustres passed and when, at last, you came again to  
Rome,  
You hoped she might omit the rite of welcoming you home ;  
But by the town you're hunted down, and needs must undergo  
it ;  
More kisses there you get than e'er sweet Lesbia gave her  
poet ;

## MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

A tailor's kiss is hardly bliss ; one loves not hairy throats  
Of farmers who convey to you a hint—and more—of goats ;  
By fullers next your sense is vexed, then hastens to your side  
The cobbler, he, apparently, has just been kissing hide—  
Now you shall brave a blear-eyed knave : none show you  
any pity,  
And then will come the very scum and refuse of the city ;  
The loathly crew so harries you, until you cry ' Alack,  
Would I have stayed afar nor paid this price for coming back ' !

### LX

#### *ON HIS BIRTHDAY*

'TWAS on thy morn, thou feast beloved of Mars,  
That first I saw the lord of all the stars,  
Now on green altars round my rustic home  
I pay the dues erstwhile I paid in Rome ;  
Forgive the change ; I cannot live a slave,  
But would enjoy the life my Kalends gave.  
In Rome my birthday made me pale with fear :—  
' Alauda loves neat wine—but is it clear  
And duly strained ? And has Sabellus got  
Mulled wine enough ? I know he likes it hot '  
Between the courses ever on the run,  
Receiving or attending every one,  
My share of dinner I must sacrifice  
To trot about a floor as cold as ice ;  
But why for casual guest endure a pain  
Which valued patrons would demand in vain ?

### LXI

#### *TO LIGURRA*

So you pretend to fear you may be hit  
By pointed epigrams, the shafts of wit ?  
To seem a worthy foeman you aspire,  
How vain alike the fear and the desire !  
Against fierce bulls the lion's wrath may rise,  
He scorns to war with puny butterflies ;  
You want a record ? Seek the sots who scrawl,  
With chalk or charcoal, filth upon a wall :  
But should I deign to brand so foul a knave,  
Good heavens ! you might be taken for my slave.

\* LXII

*THE WELCOME HOME*

KING of the former world and ancient sky  
 With whom no toil disturbed tranquillity,  
 No bolt fell fierce to punish men for sin,  
 And earth unriven kept her gold within,  
 Come, Saturn, to thine own repast of joy  
 Which Priscus gives to greet his darling boy.  
 For thou, kind Sire, hast made him safely come  
 In this sixth winter from old Numa's home.  
 Seest thou the lavish honours to thee paid,  
 How like a Roman mart the feast is made  
 With plenteous cheer and tokens on the board  
 Which shall a goodly store of gifts afford,  
 And how to give such worth a greater price  
 A careful father makes thee sacrifice.  
 Do thou then, Sire, in this thy bright December  
 Grant that such days we ever may remember.

LXIII

*ON A CORDOVAN PLAGIARIST*

CORDOVA, your store of rich olives is more  
 Than even Venafrum can boast,  
 You can vie with the best that are brought from Trieste  
 Or the groves of the Istrian coast ;  
 Though Tarentum declare that her fleeces are fair  
 And unrivalled in texture and tone,  
 Yet they borrow their hue—but more honest are you  
 And content to exhibit your own ;  
 So your fame you should guard by reproving your bard  
 Who is stealing my verse. I confess  
 That I should not much mind were his own of a kind  
 That would give me a chance of redress !  
 But a bachelor's free from reprisals, if he  
 Run away with your wife, for he's not one,  
 And ' eye for an eye ' one can hardly apply  
 To a culprit unless he has got one ;  
 So a robber may feel more incitement to steal  
 When there's nothing at all in his purse,  
 And your poet obscure may be perfectly sure  
 That no other will pilfer his verse.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXIV

## A ROUND PEG

A PAGE-BOY whose cheeks did the roses surpass  
Cinna sent to the kitchen, the gluttonous ass.

LXV

## A DELICATE DAMSEL

PHYLLIS had shown herself to me  
As yielding as she well could be,  
I thought, shall I reward the fair  
With essences or unguents rare,  
Fine cloth, perhaps a pretty frock,  
Or 'yellow boys' her purse to stock?  
But, ere I knew, this dainty love  
Clung, kissing like an amorous dove,  
About my neck, and begged of me  
A quart or so—of *eau-de-vie*!

\* LXVI

## TO AMOENUS

IT cost you a thousand, the house you possess,  
And you would be quite willing to sell it for less;  
But you're trying to gull us with tricks, people say,  
And disguise its poor rooms with pretentious display.  
Your tortoiseshell couches inlaid brightly shine,  
And your tables of African citrus look fine,  
Your sideboard is loaded with silver and gold,  
And your page-boys are quite a delight to behold.  
Then you cry out—'Two thousand: it's worth it'—I hear.  
Well, with furniture in it, that's really not dear.

\* LXVII

## TO SILIUS ITALICUS, ON VIRGIL'S BIRTHDAY

THE Ides of May as Hermes' day is known,  
The Ides of August Dian holds her own,  
Maro has made October's Ides divine;  
To keep that feast and this with his be thine.

## BOOK TWELVE

### LXVIII

#### *A WARNING TO HIS SPANISH FRIENDS*

I FLED from Rome and early calls,  
So, Spanish friends, I pray you,  
Be wise and seek the lordly halls  
Of those who can repay you.

I hate the courts, and legal strife  
My lazy mind refuses,  
For I am getting on in life  
And love to serve the Muses ;

Unbroken sleep I love ; the stir  
And din of Rome destroy it ;  
But I am going back to her  
If here I can't enjoy it.

### \* LXIX

#### *TO PAULUS*

YOUR friends are like your pictures and your wine :  
All three are old and all are genuine.

### \* LXX

#### *FORCED SOBRIETY*

WHEN his bath-towel by one bow-legged servant was carried,  
And a one-eyed old crone watched his gown while he tarried,  
And he got his scant oil from a ruptured masseur,  
Then Afer could never potations endure ;  
And if he saw any one drinking would say—  
' Smash the bottle and throw the vile liquor away ' .  
But since he's been left his old uncle's estate,  
I am told from the baths he can seldom walk straight.  
Chaliced cups and five slaves have more charm than you think :  
While Afer was poor he'd no fancy for drink.

### \* LXXI

#### *TO LYGDUS*

THERE is nothing you do not deny me to-day :  
Yet once there was nothing to which you said nay.

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

LXXII

*TO PANNYCHOS*

A FIELD and tumble-down abode  
Behind the Tombs that line the Road,  
You quit the bar for these !  
You earned a decent living when  
You harrowed only jury-men,  
And raised a crop of fees,  
The Clients paid in kind and you  
Had wheat to sell and barley, true  
The profits were not high ;  
But now 'tis easy to foretell  
That all the things you used to sell  
Henceforward you must buy !

\* LXXIII

*TO CATULLUS*

You say that you've made me your heir : all the same  
I shan't feel too certain till I read my name.

LXXIV

*WITH A GIFT OF CHEAP GLASS-WARE*

EGYPT shall send you crystal glass, meanwhile  
These cups I bought in Rome perhaps may do ;  
You know 'tis called ' Bold ware ', but would you style  
Me bolder still for sending it to you ?

Cheap stuff has virtues, this no thief would think  
Of stealing ; boiling water will not mar it ;  
And then the guest is not afraid to drink  
And servants need not tremble if they jar it ;

'Tis nervous hands that let a vessel fall—  
And here again's a point you should not miss—  
When toasts are drunk you will not mind at all  
If you should have to break a cup like this.

## BOOK TWELVE

### LXXV

FESTINAT Polytimus ad puellas ;  
Inuitus puerum fatetur Hypnus ;  
Pastas glande natis habet Secundus ;  
Mollis Dindymus est sed esse non uult ;  
Amphion potuit puella nasci.  
Horum delicias superbiamque  
Et fastus querulos, Auite, malo  
Quam dotis mihi quinquies ducena.

### LXXVI

#### *THE EXCHANGE*

WITH his wheat at ten shillings a sack  
And wine next to nothing, alack !  
No farmer need thirst, all may eat till they burst :  
But they haven't a coat for their back.

### \* LXXVII

#### *AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT*

As he stood on his toes with his face turned to heaven,  
By an internal tempest poor Aethon was riven.  
Men laughed ; but Jove thought that the wind which he  
broke  
Could not be regarded as merely a joke ;  
And so as a penalty bade him to stay  
And dine by himself for three nights from that day.

### LXXVIII

#### *TO BITHYNICUS*

I WROTE no libel touching you ;  
You say on oath I must deny it ?  
No ! there's a better thing to do,  
I'll write one now—and justify it.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXIX

## TO ATTICILLA

WHAT you ask for I always have given—and more ;  
Yet you still keep on asking, the same as before.  
If a man does not know when the word should be ' No,'  
It means there's no length to which he will not go.

LXXX

## TO CALLISTRATUS

ALL men you praise because you would  
Withhold their honour from the good ;  
So none are bad ? If that's your view,  
Then no one can be good to you.

LXXXI

## ADDITIONS

His presents take the ampler shape  
His larger means allow ;  
Of old he used to send a cape  
He sends me capers now.

LXXXII

## THE ANGLER

You may struggle as you please to escape Menogenes  
In the bath or on the playground ; at a match,  
In the hottest game of ball, right and left he catches all,  
But he registers to you his every catch.  
Or though shod and ready dressed through the dust he runs  
in quest  
Of your football, and politely hands it back ;  
Of your towels he will say, ' Oh how snowy-white are they ',  
Though a mewling baby's bib is not as black ;  
As you comb your scanty hairs, then the parasite declares  
The arrangement is the Achillean style ;  
Then he mixes your emetic and in fashion sympathetic  
Will administer to you that potion vile,  
He will mop your brow and tend you if the nauseous draught  
should rend you—  
'Tis compounded from the lees of smoky wine.  
When he's lauded and admired everything, till you are tired,  
You, from simple boredom, bid him come and dine !

## BOOK TWELVE

\* LXXXIII

### *KNOW THYSELF*

FABIANUS, the terror of men about town,  
Was wont once at hernia to jeer,  
While, if you were ruptured, the noisiest clown  
Could not match the insults you would hear.  
But he saw his own figure at bath yesterday,  
And now on that subject he's nothing to say.

\* LXXXIV

### *TO THE PAGE-BOY, POLYTIMUS*

I THOUGHT it a pity to cut your long hair,  
But now I am glad that I granted your prayer.  
Like to this was young Pelops when for his fair bride  
His ringlets clipped short showed his ivory side.

LXXXV

PEDICONIBUS os olere dicis.  
Hoc si, sicut ais, Fabulle, uerum est,  
Quid tu credis olere cunnilingis ?

LXXXVI

TRIGINTA tibi sunt pueri totidemque puellae :  
Una est nec surgit mentula. Quid facies ?

LXXXVII

### *ON COTTA*

ONCE to excuse his lack of shoes, his servant he'd condemn,  
And say his slaves, the careless knaves, were always losing  
them.  
—His slaves forsooth ! In simple truth he had but one, no  
more,  
And he must shout and rush about as though he were a score—  
A further plan now—guileful man !—his cunning executes ;  
Barefoot he goes, we may suppose, lest he should lose his  
boots !

# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

\* LXXXVIII

## *ON A CRITIC*

TONGILIANUS is most keen of scent :  
But all his efforts on his nose are spent.

\* LXXXIX

## *TO CHARINUS WHO CONCEALED HIS BALDNESS WITH BANDAGES*

A BAND round your head you continually wear :  
It is not your ears that are wrong, but your hair.

XC

## *INDEMNITY*

HIS friend was old and sick ! and Maro made  
A vow for him—for he was like to die—  
And said if heaven the burning fever stayed,  
A victim should be given to Jove on high ;  
The crisis passed : the leeches testify  
That all is well—the fever's course is run—  
So Maro makes new vows wherewith to buy  
Indemnity against the former one.

\* XCI

## *TO MAGULLA*

SINCE with your husband everything you share,  
His bed and board—and eke his minion fair—  
Why have another page-boy when you sup ?  
Ah yes, I see : there's danger in the cup.

XCII

## *RIDDLES*

WHAT should I be if great and rich ?  
That is the sort of question which  
One cannot prophesy on ;  
Apply it to yourself : e.g.,  
What sort of lion will you be  
If you become a lion ?

## BOOK TWELVE

\* XCIII

### THE GO-BETWEEN

LABULLA'S invented a curious play,  
Her lover to kiss when her lord's in the way.  
She kisses her zany a hundred times over,  
And wet from her mouth he goes straight to her lover,  
Who adds a few more from his own eager lips,  
And back to his sly smiling mistress he slips.  
And so it goes on. But between you and me,  
What a very big zany the husband must be !

XCIV

### THE COPYIST

I took to Epic ; you began it too ;  
I ceased, because I would not vie with you.  
The tragic buskin then my Muse puts on ;  
Forthwith the robe of tragedy you don.  
I thought to tune the sweet Horatian lyre ;  
You snatched the plectrum, seized with like desire.  
Satire I tried ; then Satire was your aim.  
I sang light elegies ; you did the same.  
I sought with simple epigrams to charm ;  
And you would rob me of my humble palm.  
Pray curb this greed ; say what you *don't* affect,  
And leave to me *one* style that you reject !

XCV

MUSAEI pathicissimos libellos,  
Qui certant Sybariticis libellis,  
Et tinctas sale pruriente chartas  
Instanti lege Rufe ; sed puella  
Sit tecum tua, ne thalassionem  
Indicas manibus libidinosus  
Et fias sine femina maritus.



# MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS

## XCVI

CUM tibi nota tui sit uita fidesque mariti  
Nec premat ulla tuos sollicitetue toros,  
Quid quasi paelicibus torqueris inepta ministris,  
In quibus et breuis est et fugitiua Venus ?  
Plus tibi quam domino pueros praestare probabo :  
Hi faciunt ut sis femina sola uiro ;  
Hi dant quod non uis uxor dare. ' Do tamen ' inquis  
' Ne uagus a thalamis coniugis erret amor '.

## XCVII

VXOR cum tibi sit puella qualem  
Uotis uix petat inprobus maritus,  
Diues nobilis erudita casta,  
Rumpis, Basse, latus, sed in comatis,  
Uxoribus tibi dote quos parasti.  
Et sic ad dominam reuersa languet  
Multis mentula milibus redempta ;  
Sed nec uocibus excitata blandis,  
Molli pollice nec rogata surgit.  
Sit tandem pudor aut eamus in ius.  
Non est haec tua, Basse : uendidisti.

## XCVIII

### *THE NEW RULER*

O BAETIS, olive-crowned, whose waters clear  
Transmute to gold the fleeces of thy sheep,  
Thou stream to Bacchus and to Pallas dear,  
Now, Albula, the mistress of the deep,  
Sends Rufus to thy shores : these may he keep  
In happy fortune through the coming year—  
Hard task !—as Macer kept them ; he hath weighed  
The burden and he takes it unafraid.





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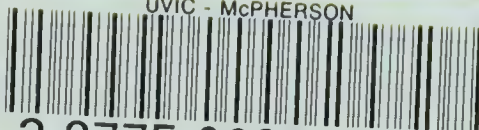
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